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LEAVING HOME.

BY GEORGE D. PRENTICE.

I know not if my path shall be
O'er the wild surges of the sea;
Or where Niagara sweeps down,
Rearing aloft her rainbow crown;
Or where the gales from Huron's Lake
The banners of the forest shake;
Or where the Mississippi's floods
Roll from the wild Lake of the Woods;
Or where Missouri's torrents sweep
Deep, dark and turbid to the deep;
Or where through Florida's rich glades
Bright birds, like stars, glance through the shades;
Or where the Gulf's wide waters roar
On Tampa's lone and desert shore;
Or where a thousand perfumes rare
Are flung on Cuba's Eden air;
Or where Bermuda blooms and smiles
The sweetest of a hundred isles;
Or where on high the Andes glow
In peaks of fire and peaks of snow;
Or where the waves of Ocean shine
Like flames beneath the burning line;
But, wheresoe'er my footsteps stray
My constant soul, by night and day,
In joy and woe, in calm and storm,
Will keep thine image fresh and warm,
And ever hail thee from afar,
Its morning flower, its evening star.

ALARIC;

OR,

THE TYRANT'S VAULT.

A SICILIAN STORY OF EARLY TIMES.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

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CHAPTER X.

A MARTYR.

The foot of the king was upon the fatal spring, but he hesitated ere he pressed upon it. Never before had he seen such beauty, and should he thus throw the lovely jewel away? He gazed upon the maiden, and as he caught the soft light of her wondrous eyes, and saw the sweet lips half apart, as though exhaling the breath of roses—as he saw her neck of alabaster whiteness, and her bosom like the breasts of swans that were twins, his mind wavered. He would possess her charms, but should he accept the risk?

What might have been the result, had he been left to himself, it is impossible to say, for while he thus hesitated, the door of the closet was thrown unceremoniously open, and the chamberlain entered. He started back as he saw the maiden standing upon that fatal spot, and an exclamation of alarm broke from his lips.

"How now?" cried the king, in an angry tone. "What do you here unbidden?"

"Pardon, sire. It is a matter of necessity, and I thought I should find thee alone."

Ianthe stepped aside as the chamberlain spoke, but he was careful not to take her place. He walked around the marble covering, and whispered to the king that he should send the maiden away. They repaired to another apartment, where Mestor was summoned, and when he made his appearance, Ianthe was once more placed under his charge.

"But my father, sire," she cried, as the eunuch was about to lead her away. "You promised to take me to him."

"And so I meant, but business of moment now claims my attention. However, thou shalt be well cared for. Go with Mestor now, and we will talk of thy father anon."

Without further command the slave led Ianthe from the apartment, and when they were gone, the king turned upon his chamberlain.

"By the Furies, Donatus, thou hast taken great liberty with me."

"How so, sire?"

"In coming upon me as thou didst in that place."

"And did you mean to consign the lady Ianthe to that vault, sire?"

"Most surely I did."

"Then I am glad I came, and though I sought thee for another purpose, yet would I have sought thee for that alone, had I been forewarned of thy intent."

"Ha—thou speakest as one who has assurance. By the powers, Donatus, I might not well brook thy interference."

"And yet I must speak, sire," replied the chamberlain, throwing off all fear, and assuming that apperance of solicitude for his royal master which he knew so well how to put on.

"Speak on," said Pyrrho. "I am ready to listen, and then govern myself as I please."

"Most surely that is thy privilege, sire. But I will speak my mind. If thou hadst taken the maiden's life, the consequences might have been greater in disaster than thou hadst imagined. We cannot judge how many in Syracuse may know the secret of her life. I do not think that secret has rested alone with Bellerus."

"Well—what of that?" demanded the king, impatiently.

"Much, sire. Should she be missed she would be traced hither, and if she was not found, the people would soon know that she had been slain in the palace. I tell thee, Pyrrho, we have not the power to stand up under such a shock as would fall upon us."

"But how can she be traced hither? She was alone in the house whence she was taken, and no one met her on her way."

"Ah, sire, you should know how such things leak out. It will be known fast enough."

ALARIC AND THE CHIEF OF THE CRAFTSMEN.

"But, Donatus, we are not fully sure that she is what we suspected."

"I am as sure of it as I am that I live. I tell thee, sire, *I know it.* So let us consider that point settled."

"And what would ye have me do?"

"The way is plain enough for your majesty. You must make her your wife. Let her once occupy that station, and you have nothing to fear from the quarter whence come the threatenings we most dread."

"But she declares that she will never be such."

"I expected she would, for 'tis evident she loves the youth Alaric. But shall the king stop at the whim of a girl? Have you not in the palace appliances that might bend her to your will? I say, sire, *she must be your queen!*"

"By the sacred temple, but thou dost talk most directly, Donatus."

"And thou must do it, sire."

"But might not an unwilling queen do me more harm than good? Suppose she should claim the sympathy of the people in her forced condition?"

"By the crown of Pluto, sire, I think, if I were king, I'd dwell lightly upon such a risk. Have you not the power? Can you not make her understand that her very life is in your hands, and that it hangs upon her obedience? Let not that thought give you trouble. Will you not think of this?"

"I will.—I have thought of it while you have been speaking, and I have almost resolved that she shall be my queen."

"Right, sire."

"And I shall think further upon it. But enough of that for the present. Now tell me what called you to my presence so unexpectedly."

"Your captain has a message for you. He came to the audience-chamber, and said he had something of importance to communicate."

"We will seek him, then."

"But, sire, thou hast pardoned me for interrupting thee."

"Yes, Donatus. And, on the whole, I am glad thou didst come."

When they reached the great chamber, they found the captain of the guard there, who seemed to have been impatiently waiting for the king.

"What is it, Claudian?" asked Pyrrho, taking a seat upon his throne.

"I have come with intelligence, sire," the captain replied.

"Of what character is it?"

"Of an important one. Thou knowest my lieutenant, Leos?"

"Yes."

"He is of a quick temper, and can ill brook opposition from those who should obey, but he is an honest man, and one firmly attached to thy interest, sire."

"I know the man well, Captain, and have more than once taken note of his proper attention to duty. But what of him?"

"I'll tell thee, sire. Thou knowest that Fingal and his men were slain in the street of the fountain, so I put upon the command in that section this same lieutenant, Leos, knowing that he was one of the most shrewd and brave of all our officers. I should prefer that he should relate to thee his own adventure, but I have come in advance to crave thy pardon for a grave error which he committed."

"If 'twas only an error, our pardon is granted in the outset. So let him be called in."

The captain withdrew, and shortly returned with his lieutenant, who was a middle-aged man, of stern aspect and powerful frame. He bowed before the king, and then moved back a pace.

"What is this thou hast to tell?" the monarch asked, regarding the man eagerly.

"Sire," he replied, "I was placed in command over the guard set within three bow-shots of the Temple of Diana, and I was particularly informed of all the circumstances which had led to this extraordinary watch, so I saw the necessity of being on the alert, and allowing nothing to escape my notice."

"And thou didst very right, good Leos."

"Last night, sire, I saw men moving about in the streets who could have no legitimate business in the quarters where they were, and I bade my men to watch them, but they were suffered to slip away without their errand's being discovered. Towards midnight I saw four men cross the square of the fountain, and those I followed myself. I had hung upon their steps till they had reached the street of Mars, and when I thought I had them most surely under my observance, they slipped away from my sight, and I knew not whither they had gone. I made all possible haste to the point where I last beheld them, but in no way could I account for their disappearance. An hour later, while I was again in the square, and musing upon this occurrence, I saw these same four men emerge from one of the narrow streets. Two of my guard were with me, and we concealed ourselves so as to observe the men should they pass near us. They did come near—so near that I could see the outlines of their faces—and I felt sure that two of the party belonged within the palace of your Majesty. I judged so more particularly from their garbs, which I knew were the same as those worn by some of the serving-men in the lower departments of this place. I thought it strange that servants of the king's household should be stealthily gliding about in such a quarter at such an hour, and I determined to arrest them. As they were very near I stepped out before them and ordered them to stop, but instead thereof they took to flight, and in spite of all our efforts, three of them escaped us. We succeeded in securing one of them, but he was not one of those whom we had been most anxious to secure. He was an old man, of three-score at least, of the name of Proteus, and was a cunning worker in various kinds of metals."

"I have heard of him," interrupted the king. "He is not a native here?"

"No, sire. He was from the East—from Palestine, I think."

"Go on with your account. I am interested."

"When we found that the other three had escaped us, we took this man to the guard-house, and there I questioned him. First, I asked him if he knew whither his companions had gone, and he said he did not. Then I asked him what he had been doing out so late, to which he would give no direct answer. Then I asked who were the two serving-men of the royal palace that had been with him. At first he seemed inclined to deny that they were such, but when I made him understand that I was confident upon this point, he flatly refused to answer. I had been clothed by my commander with power sufficient to meet any emergency of this kind, and I determined to wring an answer from him, for I conceived it to be of the utmost importance that your majesty should know who had been out from the palace under such suspicious circumstances. I asked him again if he would give me the names of his companions, and again he refused. Then I told him I would take his life if he did not speak, and tell me who were the men from the palace that had been with him, and his answer was, that he would die before the answer should pass his lips.

"I must confess, sire, that I was deeply wroth at this. It galled me to have my authority thus set at naught, in the presence of my followers, by a simple craftsman, and I determined to put his endurance to the test. Once more I threatened him with death if he did not give me the names I asked for, and his refusal was even more peremptory than before. I ordered him to be stripped from the waist up, and then lashed to one of the pillars of the guard-house. When he was secured, with his arms turned behind him, and lashed around the pillar, I put the question to him again; but he only answered me, that he had spoken all he should speak upon that subject. Then I ordered one of my men to present a sharp spear to his naked left breast; and when this had been done I assured him that the steel should be driven to his heart if he did not speak. He told me I might kill him if I pleased, but that no power of earth could force from him a secret which he had once promised to keep. This excited my curiosity and my suspicions still more, for I saw that the men from the palace had reason for not wishing to be known; and, if the keeping of their secret was worth a human life, how much importance might there not be for the king's knowing it. The spear-head was pressed upon his bosom until the flesh was punctured, and the red blood started forth, and yet he would not speak.

"Sire—he died! He died with the secret unspoken; and to the last moment he was firm and unshaken. I could not help it. I did not think he would remain so stubborn. I believed that his fortitude would give way ere a vital spot was reached. I caught his head as it sank forward, and there was a whispered sentence upon his lips. I caught only the last word, and that was—JEHOVAH!"

The king remained for some moments speechless with wonder. He gazed first upon his chamberlain, and then upon his captain. He seemed to care nothing for the deed of death the lieutenant had done—he only cursed the fate that had kept the victim's lips sealed.

"Donatus," he finally said, "what thinkest thou of this?"

"I think it most strange, sire, and startling."

"I thought it so," added the captain; "and hence I was anxious that you should hear it as it was."

"But there must be a deep cause behind all this," pursued the king. "There must be an organization of more than ordinary moment. Leos, I am sorry thou didst take the fellow's life, for I would have questioned him myself; but I cannot blame thee. We must find another, and we may be more successful. Only bear this one thing in mind, and have it communicated to all the officers of the guard: If another man is apprehended under like circumstances, let him be brought at once to me. By the gods, I will question him with such appliances as shall make his tongue speak to some purpose."

"You shall be obeyed, sire," responded the captain.

Then the king asked Leos if he could give any description of the two men he had seen, and whom he took to be members of the royal household.

"I cannot describe them, sire," the lieutenant replied, "for it was quite dark, and I could not distinguish their features. But the impression was a vivid one. I knew their dress, and, in my own mind, I was sure. Thou knowest how a man may entertain a conviction as strong as absolute proof can make it, and yet be unable to substantiate it to another. But the prisoner, in fact, admitted that two of his companions were members of your majesty's household."

"This thing must be sifted to the very bottom," declared the monarch. "Perhaps, if you were to see all the inmates of the palace assembled you could distinguish the two men whom you observed?"

"I might, sire."

The king was too anxious upon the subject to allow an opportunity to escape him, and he at once gave orders for closing all the doors and gates, and having the servants mustered under their respective chiefs. When this had been done he took the lieutenant with him, and passed before the assembled servitors. Every man had answered to his name, and Leos scanned every one; but among so many—where there were hundreds wearing the same dress he had seen, and so many of the same size and general outline of form—it was impossible for him to approach a decision. He was puzzled and confessed that he could not even tell whom to suspect.

The most rigid inquiries were instituted, and no information of importance could be gained; and finally the king was forced to give up.

But he did not give up the determination to push this matter to the utmost extent of his power. There was a fearful plot somewhere—he felt sure of it—and he must fathom it by his own wit. He had never striven to make friends, so he had no strong friendships to flee to now. But he could depend somewhat upon those who were interested with him, and upon them alone could he call for counsel in this hour of need. He conferred long with Donatus, and it was finally agreed upon that every suspicious man should be brought at once to the palace, and consigned to the Tartarian vault beyond the private bath.

"It is the only safe course," said the monarch. "Bellerus is already disposed of; we'll have Alaric soon; and then others shall be sent to the valley of shadows as we find them."

"And Ianthe?" suggested the chamberlain.

"By the couch of Venus, I have resolved to keep her!" cried Pyrrho, excitedly. "I have pondered well upon it, and I think such is the best course. Aha—I'll have the most lovely maiden of all Sicily for my own, and I'll bend the influence she may wield to my own benefit. I may have a troublous time in taming her."

"Marry her first, and then use the authority of a husband. The husband may accomplish more than the king."

"Right, Donatus. I'll try it."

"And your majesty fully pardons me for having interrupted you while you held the maiden over the fatal crypt?"

"Aye—from my heart, Donatus. She is a rare prize. She may minister to my safety, to my love, or to my vengeance; but, be it as it may, I am glad she is saved."

CHAPTER XI.

THE MYSTIC TIE.

We left Alaric in the lone chamber beneath the Temple of Diana, whither he had been consigned by Bellerus. When he was left alone he wondered much at what had transpired. He knew that the temple was a sacred place, and held in great reverence by the people, and that the priests thereof had much power. How, then, the humble craftsman could have gained access to these secret chambers, and passed guarded points as one who had due privilege, was a matter of astonishment to him. But it was not upon these points that he dwelt with the most feeling, for there was something moving within more weighty than mere surprise or astonishment. There seemed present with him a FATE—a Spirit of prophecy and of power—which beckoned to him from its mystic throne, and bade him cast away the rusting implements of the past, and gird on a bright armor for the necessities of the future. He felt that a great need was awaiting a champion, and that the man who would respond must be pure and unselfish. He had heard enough, and felt enough, to arouse in his soul the will to perform a great work; but when he thought of the result—when his mind dwelt upon the image which a consummation of that work presented—he could not but instinctively shrink from it. It seemed a result too stupendous for him ever to realize; and, with an effort of the will, he turned his thoughts into another channel.

He examined the walls and the furniture of the apartment, and he knew that such a place had never been made for a prison. The porphyry, the marble, and the epidote were not only highly polished, but in many places elaborately sculptured; while the furniture—the couches, the cushion stands, and the footstools—were covered with the finest of tapestry, and inlaid with gold and ivory. He tasted of the viands, and found them exquisitely cooked and flavored. He had made an inspection of the place, and resumed his seat upon the couch, when the door was opened, and some one entered. Alaric looked up, and beheld a figure which inspired him with sudden awe. It was an aged man, with a beard long and flowing, his form enveloped in a robe of silk, which fell from the shoulders to his feet. This vestment was adorned with gold and jewels of rare workmanship, and so arranged as to form characters of hidden meaning.

"Thy name is Alaric?" the old man said, after he had closed the door behind him.

"It is, sir," our hero replied.

"Since I wish to be plain with thee, and have thee plain and frank with me, I will tell thee who and what I am. Didst ever hear of Pythion?"

"Pythion?" repeated the youth, gazing eagerly into the face of his visitor. "I know that my father had a bosom friend of that name. He was an architect of renown, and a philosopher, and came from Athens."

"And has since become one of the priests of this temple," added the old man. "Know, Alaric, that I am Pythion, and that I was thy father's friend. And I now give thee my right hand in token of the continuance of that friendship to thee." He extended his hand as he spoke, and the youth grasped it with confidence.

"I have need of friends," Alaric said, tremulously, for his heart was moved; "and I accept thine with the deepest gratitude."

"And dost thou feel perfect trust in me?"

"Aye—from my inmost soul." And the youth spoke from a firm and reliable conviction. He had an intuitive perception—an assurance of spirit—that the man before him was to be implicitly trusted. And then he remembered what Bellerus had told him. In short, he had no fear; but the most abiding confidence and faith in the good-will of those who might meet him here.

"You must be fatigued and weary," suggested Pythion, taking a seat by Alaric's side.

"I am somewhat weary," our hero replied, “though I might bear much more of fatigue if there were need.”

“But there is no need, my son; and thou had'st better keep thy strength against the time of necessity, for such a time may ere long come. I know what thou has't passed through since the night set in, and I think thou had'st better rest awhile. On the morrow I shall have something of importance to communicate; but now I will merely ask thee a simple question: Would'st thou like to join a fraternity to which thy father belonged, the brethren of which would be true to thee in return for thy truth to them?”

“Aye—I should,” quickly answered the youth.

“But suppose it were to put thy life in jeopardy, my son?”

“I should not hesitate at that; for my life is not mine when duty demands it.”

“I am pleased with thy answer, and many others will be likewise pleased. And now follow me, and thou shalt find rest.”

Without question Alaric arose and followed the old man from the place. He went but a short distance when he found himself in a small apartment, the walls of which were hung with cinnamon colored tapestry, and where was a soft couch of lightest down, with blankets of silk and of wool.

Alaric did not remain long awake after he was left alone, for he was worn and weary with both bodily and mental fatigue. He reflected awhile upon the subject which Pythion had broached to him, but he did not seek to weary himself with useless conjecture, as he firmly believed that he was in the hands of those who would be true friends to him. He fell asleep, and though his dreams were of a strange, startling character, yet he finally slept soundly, and when he awoke he found Pythion by his bedside.

“Thou hast slept well and soundly,” said the old man, as he saw the youth fairly awake.

“I have certainly slept very soundly,” returned Alaric, lifting himself upon his elbow. “Is it yet day?”

“Aye—it is nearly noon.”

“Noon!” repeated our hero, starting further up. “And have I slept so long?”

“Thou hast not slept many hours, for it was well nigh morning when I brought thee hither. But come—thou shalt have thy bath, and thy breakfast, and then we may find business.”

Alaric arose and put on his garments, and then followed his conductor to a distant apartment where was a bath of warm water.

“Thou hast wondrous space of room beneath the temple,” said the youth, unable to conceal his surprise at all he saw.

“Thou shalt know all in good season,” returned the priest, “though let me give thee a little light at this point. Thou could'st not have beheld what has here been shown thee had we not known that thou would'st take upon thyself the solemn obligation necessary to bind thee to secrecy. Two men have pledged their lives for your faith. Were you to leave us now—that is, supposing we would let you go—and reveal what thou hast here seen, both Bellerus and Artabanus would die. Be assured it is no common privilege which has been granted thee; and perhaps the reason of our unusual favor may not be known to thee for some time to come.”

With this Alaric was left alone, and he at once proceeded to perform his ablution. He then found clean linen, and a raiment different from any he had before worn—a tunic of scarlet stuff, and a mantle of pure white, which was to be secured about the loins by a stout cord. In a little while Pythion reappeared, and he was reconducted to the apartment where he had first found himself on the night before, and where he now found food prepared for him. He eat, and when he was done, the old man asked him if he was now prepared to be initiated into the mysteries of the secret brotherhood of which mention had been made.

“Think well before you answer,” said the priest, in a solemn tone; “for when you have once crossed the threshold there can be no turning back. Your life even, will be no longer your own. Wherever the light has shone a thousand men would be ready to slay you on the instant of your treason!”

“My father was with you?” said the youth.

“Yes.”

“And—pardon me for the question—who was it that bore me out from among the usurper's murderers, and carried me without the walls, on that fatal night that saw my father and my brother slain?”

“They were humble craftsmen, Alaric.”

“And why did they save me in preference to the many others who were in danger? I knew them not.”

“But they knew thee as the son of one of their honored brethren.”

“So I have thought since I came hither. Lead on, father. I am prepared and anxious.”

The youth was led to an adjoining apartment, where he suffered himself to be blindfolded, after which he was led away, he knew not whither. He only knew that he met with many obstructions, and that his guide gained him passage by many strict guards. Finally he knew he was in an apartment which was most carefully guarded, and where many persons were assembled, as he could tell by the subdued sounds that broke upon the still air about him. He felt his bosom bared, and a strange voice addressed him. He was stricken with awe, but with nothing of terror. The ceremonies proceeded, and as the light gradually broke in upon him his emotions became deeper and more whelming. He was told of a One Living God, who was above all the gods of men; and he was asked if he could realize such a God. The thought had been with him for years—a germ of reason struggling for growth in his soul—and it burst forth now into Faith. He said he felt confidence in the great I AM—that in the Supreme JEHOVAH he would put his trust. He did not shrink from the obligation which was imposed upon him, for he was sure that he had heard the voice of Artabanus close by him.

Finally the obstruction was removed from his eyes, and he was restored to light. He found himself upon his knees, before an altar dedicated to the One Living and True God. About him stood many men—stout, bold looking men they were—all clothed in the humble garb of toil. There was no distinction of dress there. The lord and the artisan—the patrician and the slave—met upon an equality. It was new and strange, but it was holy and sublime. All that had been symbolized had looked towards a better world of humanity, and in all the striking lessons he had received the one great truth of Brotherhood, and the mutual dependence of man upon his fellows, had been constantly presented. The craven might have shrunk from the mystic ordeal, but to the bold and manly heart there was something awe-inspiring and exalting in it all.

After this the youth was instructed in many mystic signs and tokens, and at length he received the hand of the Master in token of full confidence and fellowship. He gazed up into the Master's face, and he found it as he had supposed from the voice. It was Artabanus, the old Hermit of Catalano.

“Alaric—my son, and yet my brother,” the old man said, “I trust that you may never regret the obligations you have this night taken upon yourself. You now belong to an organization more extensive than you may have yet imagined. I could not tell you its numbers, for no man knows them; but wherever the light of science has spread, there will our brotherhood be found. In time you will know more than you now know, and great knowledge shall be given thee. These, whom you see about you, are a few of your brethren, and remember that they are each and every one bound to you as you have bound yourself to them. There is not a heart here that would not shed its last drop of blood ere it would give up the sacred secret thou had'st entrusted to it.”

Alaric recognized many of the faces about him as among those he had known in former years, though he could not recall the names of many of them. All were glad to take him by the hand, and he thought they seemed to regard him with more than ordinary interest.

Finally the assembly was dismissed, for most of those present had work to do, and ere long our hero was left alone with Pythion and Artabanus.

“Well, Alaric,” asked the hermit, “what think you of it?”

“Of what?” returned the youth, who had been busy with his own thoughts.

“Of the new position in which you find yourself.”

“I feel that I am as one brought out of darkness into light,” was Alaric's ready answer.

“And you shall find the light increase as you advance,” added Pythion.

“Are there many of the brotherhood in this city?” our hero asked.

“There are over four thousand.”

“So many?”

“Aye—and all true and tried men, as thou mayest yet find. Perhaps thou hast wondered that we should have such freedom of passage within the limits of the Temple?”

“I have wondered at it, for I know that the people hold this Temple of Diana in great reverence, and think that only their own priests have access into its sacred places.”

“And yet they know not their priests,” said Artabanus, with a smile; “nor do they know the secret of the oracles to which they sometimes give ear. But, Alaric, this temple was built by craftsmen of our brotherhood. From the lowest apprentice, who bore burdens upon his back, to the Master who presided over the workmen and over the work, all were of our mystic fraternity; and the structure was prepared and reared that it might give us the shelter and protection we needed. The vast external pile was reared, and then, while a few men were apparently at work only in adorning the interior, hundreds were busily employed, both night and day, in constructing these mystic chambers; and during the whole time there was not heard the sound of ax, hammer, or any tool of iron. The stones were all hewn, squared and numbered in the quarries where they were raised, and when brought hither they fitted to that exact nicety which precluded the necessity of noise or confusion. This was done long before our day. The craftsmen who fashioned these massive chambers have long since passed to their spiritual home; but their valuable secrets they have left to us, and they have left to us many virtues which we should strive to emulate.”

The more the youth heard the more deeply was he moved with wonder and admiration, and so much was he inspired by the things which he saw and felt, that he was fully prepared to lay down his life, if need be, rather than prove false to a single responsibility he had assumed. There was something in the idea of the One God—the Supreme Ruler—the Jehovah—that sank deeply into his soul, and greatly exalted all his conceptions of the spiritual and immortal part of his nature. He had held a vague, dreamy notion of some Infinity before, but nothing which his understanding had reached.

When our hero returned to the chamber where he had first rested and refreshed himself, it was very near nightfall, and the old hermit began to prepare for taking his leave.

“I would like to go with you to your mountain cave,” said Alaric.

“We have just been considering upon that point,” returned Artabanus; “and I had about made up my mind that you should go and keep me company for awhile. We have had reports from our men, and we find that every avenue of the city is most strictly guarded. The king feels sure that you have not yet escaped beyond the walls, and he means that you shall not.”

“But I can find some disguise.”

“Ah, my son, you could find no disguise that would answer you; for the orders of the soldiers are such that they must examine every person whom they do not surely know.”

“Then I am only in a prison, after all!”

“Not so, Alaric,” returned Artabanus, somewhat severely. “Even if thou could'st not leave this place at present, be assured that your hands would find better work to perform than such as is usually given to prisoners. But when our former brethren constructed this place they knew the nature of man, and they knew that kings would oftentimes be tyrants; so they planned ways by which their friends could escape from the city in times of great need. I think there would be no danger in your bearing me company. What think you, Pythion?”

“I see not how there can be any,” the priest replied. “I have not heard that the king has set any guard without the walls; but, even if he has, they would be only placed by the highways, and on the coast.”

“You shall go, my son,” pronounced the hermit. “A few days upon the mountain will revive your frame from the fatigue of your long voyage.”

“And can I not see Ianthe before I go?”

“No. That were impossible.”

“She is well?”

“She was when I last heard from her. But come. The sun is already down, and we have some distance to go. You had better leave the executioner's sword which you brought hither with you, and take one which our priestly warden will give you.”

The youth was furnished with a garb such as the better class of artisans usually wore, consisting of a tunic of dark woolen cloth, and a mantle of colored cotten, which could be worn from the shoulder, or thrown over the arm, at pleasure. The sword which was given him was of Egyptian manufacture, being longer than the Roman weapon, and of finer material and workmanship. When this was girded upon his loins he was ready to set forth with the hermit, and Pythion lighted a small torch, and conducted them through many apartments and curious windings, until he reached a door of solid brass, which was set within a wall of the same metal. This was thrown open by a guard who was stationed there, and here the priest resigned the torch into the hermit's hands.

“Look well to our men,” said Artabanus; “and if, from this extraordinary guard which is now posted in the city, their movements are likely to be noticed, let them remain at home for a while.”

“It shall be done, my master.”

Then the hermit and his youthful companion stepped over the brazen threshold, and the heavy door was closed behind them.

CHAPTER XII.

A RISK, AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

“We are now beyond the compass of the temple,” said Artabanus, after the brazen door had been shut behind them, “and within a passage which must have cost great time and labor. It is said that our brethren were three years in building this way. Its course is many feet below the surface of the earth, and the walls are of necessity impervious to water.”

Alaric gazed about him. He found himself within a passage some ten feet wide, with an arched roof about the same in hight; the walls and floor of which were of the most massive and substantial masonry. It was truly calculated to inspire wonder, and the youth was profuse in his questions and remarks.

They hurried on at a swift pace, and at the end of an hour they came to a point where the passage seemed cut entirely off by a solid wall. But the hermit found a way of egress by opening a secret door, and, when they had passed through, this door, which was simply a movable rock, was reclosed. This brought them to a sort of chamber, much larger and higher than the passage, and the youth noticed that the floor was strewn with rubbish and dirt, and with the bones of animals.

“Perhaps you wonder at this,” remarked the old man, as he noticed that his companion was gazing upon the accumulated mass of dirt and rubbish.

“I must confess that I thought it somewhat curious,” replied Alaric.

“And you will find the rest of our way in equal confusion,” added Artabanus; “and there is reason for it. If you will cast your eyes behind you, you will find that the wall through which we have just passed offers little promise to a stranger of any passage beyond.”

Alaric gazed around as his guide held up the torch, and he was surprised to find that the rear wall had the appearance of being the face of a solid ledge.

“It would puzzle you to find the way back,” remarked the hermit, with a smile.

“It certainly would,” replied the youth.

“In short,” pursued the other, “you could not find it; nor will I stop to instruct you in the secret now. But I will explain this seeming negligence. That end of this mystic way which opens into the subterranean chambers of the temple could not be reached by mortal man, except he be duly entitled to the secret; but this outer end cannot be so guarded. Some wanderer might stumble upon the entrance; so we have caused this disposition of things to be made. If a stranger should, by any means, make his way hither, he would only find an old cavern, built for he could not tell what, and given up to reptiles and wild beasts. He might think that he was the first who had explored the place for ages.”

Alaric said that he understood it; and then they moved on. The way soon grew more narrow, and they were forced to move more slowly and carefully; but ere long they stepped forth upon a broad shelf of rock, and were in the open air. A winding, dubious way led them down to the foot of the mountain, and in a few moments more Alaric recognized the path which led up towards the hermit's cave. It was a clear, bright evening, and they walked leisurely along, conversing as they went, and in due time they reached the cave in safety. An hour was spent in conversation, mostly upon subjects of the past, and then they retired for the night, the youth being conducted to an inner branch of the cavern, where a couch of leopard-skins was prepared.

Alaric had much to think of—so much that he could think clearly upon no one point—and after getting thoroughly entangled in his mind he fell asleep. How long he had slept he could not tell, though he seemed to have rested some time, when he was aroused by hearing a footstep in the outer cave; and as he raised himself upon his elbow he heard some one call the name of Artabanus. The voice was quick and eager, as though urged by dire necessity, and the youth sprang from his couch and hurried out, and as he reached the outer apartment he could just distinguish the outlines of a man standing at the entrance. He was upon the point of speaking, when the hermit appeared, bearing a lighted torch in his hand, and Alaric then recognized the new-comer to be one of the men whom he had seen within the mystic chambers of the temple.

“How now, Marco?” asked Artabanus. “Why hast thou come up at this strange hour?”

“Are we alone?” returned the man.

“None are here who may not hear what thou hast to communicate.”

“Thy presence is needed at the temple immediately,” said the messenger, in hurried tones. “There is suspicion afloat, and a blow has fallen!”

“A blow! Speak, Marco—what mean you?”

“Alas, Master, a brother has been called upon to sacrifice his life rather than betray his companions. Good Proteus has fallen!”

“The silversmith?”

“Yes.”

“But how?”

“He was returning home from the temple a few hours since, in company with the craftsmen who are servitors at the royal palace. The king's lieutenant, Leos, with a party of soldiers, having recognized the garbs of the members of the royal household, and being anxious to ascertain what they did in the public streets at that late hour, laid in wait, and made an attempt to arrest them; but those whom they were most anxious to secure made good their escape, while Proteus, being well advanced in years, alone fell into their hands. The lieutenant demanded of him the names of his companions, but he would not give them. He was then taken to the guard-house, and upon his still refusing to answer, he was stripped naked from the waist up, and lashed to a pillar, with his arms bound behind him. Then a sharp spear was presented to his bared bosom, and an answer again demanded. Repeated demands were as repeatedly refused, even after the flesh was pierced, and finally the cruel steel was driven to his heart!”

“Is this thing so?” asked Artabanus, in a husky, tremulous voice.

“Yes, master. It happened since midnight, and news was at once brought to us. Pythion is anxious to see you, and the others demand your counsel.”

“Alas, poor Proteus! He was one of our noblest men—one most worthy! But there shall be a reckoning for this. Alaric,” the old man added, turning to the youth, and speaking with unusual depth and strength, “the hour draws nigh in the which thou shalt give report of a charge committed to thee by Heaven! Marco, what is the hour?”

“It lacks not more than an hour of daybreak.”

“Then I will hasten down with thee. I think, however, that I shall only counsel perfect quietness for a while. The hour is not yet come. Alaric, thou hadst best remain here until I return.”

“I will do so.”

“And thou wilt not venture far away”

“No, father. I will be very careful. Thou shalt find me here when thou returnest.”

In a few minutes Artabanus was ready to set out, and when Alaric was left alone, he returned to his couch, but he could not sleep. The thoughts of the old silversmith's death had so wrought upon his feelings, that further repose was out of the question, and he put on his mantle and walked out upon the plateau in front of the cave, where he paced up and down until the sun arose from the bosom of the sea. He then went in and prepared a meal for himself, and having eaten this, he found entertainment for a while over an old manuscript which the hermit had left.

The sun had been up two hours, and yet the old tutor did not return. Alaric paced up and down before the cave, ever and anon stopping to gaze off upon the distant city, until he had become tired of this occupation, and finally he resolved to walk down the mountain and meet his old friend, having no doubt that Artabanus would soon return. He thought there could be no danger—he would not venture upon the highway—he would only keep the path, and wait, if need be, for his host. He buckled on his sword, and taking a stout oaken staff in his hand, he set forth. He pursued his way down the rugged descent slowly and easily, pondering and talking with himself as he went, and at last reached the foot of the mountain. Here he sat down for a little while, and knocked the small stones about with the end of his staff.

The sea was only a short distance off, and as the sound of the murmuring waves broke upon his ear, he fancied that he should like to go down and snuff up the invigorating atmosphere from the briny water. He could go and return before Artabanus would come. If he gave the thought of danger a place in his mind, it was only for a moment, and under very light consideration at that. The point where he would strike the shore was at some distance from the city, and a place not much frequented. The path by which he had come down from the little stream, where it leaped along the side of the mountain, was not the one that led by Glycon's cot, the latter being further to the south, and striking the coast some two miles distant from where he now was.

The youth gave one more look in the direction from which Artabanus was to come, and as he did not see him, he arose and moved towards the sea. It was only along at the foot of a low cliff—then among a mass of detached rocks—then through a straggling copse of stunted bushes and trees—and he stood upon the sandy shore of the sea. He had just reached this point, and had stopped to gaze off upon the boundless expanse of water, when a sudden exclamation close at hand startled him from his reverie. He gazed around and saw four soldiers, who had been standing beneath the shade of a cypress tree. He had come out so near to them that they could have reached him with their spears as he passed them, but they had evidently suffered him to go on that they might observe him more closely. As they started to approach him his first thought was of flight; but he could not regain the path, for they had stepped into his way, so he resolved, if there was danger, to face it. He cast his eyes quickly about him to assure himself that there were no more at hand, and then he faced the armed men who had interrupted him.

“It is he!” said one of the soldiers to another, as our hero turned his face towards them.

“It is, most surely,” was the response.

“Is it of me you speak?” asked Alaric.

“Yes,” replied he who seemed to be the leader of the squad.

“And what say ye of me?”

“That thou art one of whom we are in search, and we call upon thee, in the king's name, to surrender.”

“Surrender?” repeated Alaric, as though he were greatly surprised. “And for what?”

“Thou knowest very well for what. But mark ye: We know how thou didst escape from the palace, and how, with some assistance, thou didst dispose of the lieutenant, Fingal; and, furthermore, we know that by some extraordinary means thou hast got out from the city, but thou art now our prisoner. Thou canst not hope to escape us. So wilt thou surrender quietly?”

Alaric hesitated only for a moment. If he surrendered, his chances of life were less than they would be in an engagement with the men before him, so he answered—

“I know of no authority which can command me a prisoner, and I shall not surrender myself as such.”

“Why—fool!—we shall kill thee on the spot if thou art stubborn.”

“And what will your king do if he gains me into his power?” returned Alaric. He did not deny his identity, for he believed the soldiers knew him well enough.

“That is none of our business,” said the leader of the gang. “Our business is to arrest thee, which we shall straightway do.”

“Then do it,” returned the youth, drawing his sword, and still retaining the stout staff in his left hand.

“Dead or alive! our orders were,” explained the officer.

“You'll take me dead, if you take me at all.”

At this the leader, as though in a fit of rage, threw his spear, but Alaric had no trouble in dodging it; but he did find trouble quickly afterwards, for while the first rushed upon him with his drawn sword, the other three pressed forward with their pointed spears, though, fortunately, they did not immediately thrust with them, seeming to hope that their close proximity to his breast would intimidate him, and lead him to surrender. But they were doomed to disappointment; Alaric saw, from their very look, that these three meant to take him alive if possible, so he directed his especial attention, for a moment, to their leader, who had already prepared for a furious thrust at his bosom. He knocked the blow down with his staff, and then, with a quick, strong arm, drove his sword through the fellow's neck, and instantly afterwards forced him back by planting one foot in the pit of his stomach.

The man fell backward, and this was a signal for his companions to go at the work in earnest, and they did so.

“Surrender, or we shall take your life!” cried one of them.

But Alaric made no answer, save by striking down the point of one spear, and leaping away from the thrust of another. The soldiers had now become fierce and resolute, and they set upon him without further parley. He found his stout staff of great service to him in such a conflict, for by it he was enabled to knock down many blows which he might not otherwise have avoided. At length he dealt one man a blow upon the neck which laid him sprawling upon the sand, but at the same moment he received a wound under the left arm. He felt the sharp steel enter his flesh, and he knew that the wound must be a dangerous one. He might soon grow weak from loss of blood, and then his fate would be sealed. This thought nerved him up to greater power, and he met the two remaining men with the purpose of making quick work of it. He dodged around in a circle until he got them separated, and then as quick as thought he turned upon the one nearest to him—knocked away his spear-point, and ran him through the body. In a moment more he met the other—he felt his arm growing weak—but a thought of the tyrant's purpose—a thought of Ianthe—sent the thrill of power along his nerves, and the last soldier quickly rolled upon the sand with his head split clean open between the ears.

Alaric saw that his enemies were all dead, and with a quick step he turned towards the mountain. But the quickness of movement was soon gone. The extraordinary excitement had been lifted from him, and he now felt all his weakness. O! could he not reach the cave! Or—if not so, could he not at least reach a point where Artabanus would find him! He struggled on—he staggered as one who is drunk with much wine—he reeled, like a tree that is riven by the hurricane—he grew sick and faint at heart—his vision became dim and obscured, and his brain seemed to whirl in circles which grew less and less. He raised his eyes towards the mountain, but all was dark as night—he stretched forth his hands, as though for help, and fell forward upon his face ere yet he had reached the cypress wood! There was a vision before him—apparent to his senses—of the king, of the temple, of the mystic brotherhood—fading, fading—till one sweet face was left—and with the name of Ianthe trembling upon his nerveless lips, utter oblivion fell upon him!

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

◆

A KNACK FOR IT.

BY AN ELDER SISTER.

I am the eldest of seven sisters, who came on to this mortal stage one after another, as fast as they could get here. My earliest recollections are of cradle-rocking, and baby-tending—for though scarcely more than a babe myself, the speedy advent of numerous successors rendered it necessary to put *my* hands early to the cradle. Thus early called upon to exert my powers, they of course rapidly developed. and by the time I had reached my fourteenth year, I was a regular little old lady. My heart was as full of care, almost, as was my mother's, and my head was in a perpetual study concerning means and ends.

My parents were by no means wealthy, and the task of providing for seven girls and four boys (who came after all hope of sons had been extinguished) was no joke. Imagine the quantity of material requisite to clothe so many human figures, small though they were, and then think of the amount of labor required to get this material made up. As I was the eldest daughter, it was expected of me to be ingenious, and save, as much as possible, the expense of hiring dresses, and bonnets, and jackets and trowsers, &c., made. I thought, and contrived, and worked early and late. It was not easy. I was obliged to make many trials before I attained to anything like expertness in the various departments of business which it fell to my lot to perform.

Where there is a will there is a way, and I managed to do almost everything. I could fit dresses and cut boys' clothes; I could make bonnets in the most approved style; I could cut and make my mother's caps—even her dress caps, and could fix all manner of ornamental trifles for the decking out of myself and my sisters when we went into company.

My reward for all this was that I was called a naturally tasteful girl, who had a knack at everything, and to whom it was no trouble at all to do all the difficult needlework of both the masculine and the feminine gender.

At first I was rather pleased to hear myself thus spoken of. I felt as if my family, and other people, also, must entertain quite a respect for me, if I really *was* so gifted. But by-and-by, as my sisters grew larger, and still looked to me to do all their cutting, and fussing and fixing, I began to tire of the unending labor, and to think that it might be quite as well for some of them to work for *me*, as for me to work any longer for them.

“Dear me! *I* can't bother with this thing! Susan must do it. Such things are no trouble to *her*, she has such a knack at them.”

“Mother, you know I can't do this—why *do* you give it to me? There's Susan, she always does such troublesome work. It never is any trouble to her, you know.”

“Here, Susan, I'll give up all this cutting and arranging to you. You are so tasteful that you can easily do it right,” &c.

Such words, sounding everlastingly in my ears, and the confinement that I was under, never being able to make long, pleasant visits, as my sisters did, for I must be on hand to see to everything, I had such “a knack at making things go right,” grew at last into a matter of serious dissatisfaction to me. I saw clearly that the mighty difference between my sisters and myself was no more than this, that *I* had a knack *for industry and application*, while *their* peculiar “knack” was for ease and self-indulgence. They all imposed upon me; they made me their servant, and justified themselves for overlading my hands by saying, “Oh, Susan has a knack for all such troublesome kinds of work; it is easier for her to do it than it is for us;” and dropping all that they did not desire, they turned to their books, their music or their company, leaving poor Susan to worry through her labors as best she might.

This did not suit me, and I left home to live where I could turn my hardly acquired “knack” to some account for my own benefit. My sisters now have an opportunity to discover how that much lauded knack was obtained.

◆

A DOMESTIC NECESSITY.

Every house should have as an inmate a good-natured, sensible, tidy, old lady. This important fixture should always be, if possible, a grandmother, or, as next best, an aunt; yet so indispensable to the respectability, comfort, and convenience of a well-regulated household is the old lady, that if this system of house-keeping become general, it will become quite natural to find under the head of “Wants” in newspapers inquiries for proper old ladies to supply the lack of dear old folks gone to the better home. Indeed, old ladies discovering themselves in demand, would keep in preservation much longer, nor begin to make winding sheets and grave caps full ten years before the great reaper came to gather in the shocks of corn fully ripe. Old ladies *are* needed. Providence designed such to fill a large space in the domestic circle: a class remarkable as living not for themselves but for others—the most beautiful specimens of disinterested love this side of Heaven.

A VISIONARY'S FANCIES.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

They called him dead, they told me he was laid
In yon old forest—he had loved its shade—
And so I wandered there, and, 'neath the tree
Where he was wont to lisp sweet words to me,
I saw his name—Clair Vernon—graven deep
On the cold whiteness of a marble heap.

Oft in the soft light of the eve's first star,
A broken string from off his hushed guitar,
A snowy glove or faded flower, I see,
And turn forgetful, whispering—"Where is he?"
And some mysterious voice from far replies:
"With God and all the angels in the skies."

There comes the moon—oh, he is coming too!
He wanders with her thro' the unbounded blue;
When from her couch of clouds ye see her rise,
His beauty flashes over half the skies,
And ye might deem it the returning light
Of the lost Pleiad burning thro' the night!

See yonder pearly cloud, divinely fair—
A pale, slight, youthful form 's reclining there!
Like the unfathomed blue of midnight skies,
Soft with a tender starlight seem his eyes;
And how he smiles—the beautiful and true!
Alas! the moon goes—he is going too!

◆

LORD WINCUP.

A DRAMA IN PROSE.

BY OLIVER SINCLAIR.

SCENE I.

THE YOUNG LORD AND THE FORESTER'S BRIDE.

Two young men were seated at a table, over their wine, in one of the old baronial halls of England.

One of them was the young lord of the manor, who had but a few days previously, by the death of his father, the earl of W——, come into the inheritance and into the possession of the proud titles of his ancestors.

He wore the uniform of the Guards, was handsome, but with a sensual eye; and flushed with wine and pride, as he now was, his looks were imperious and disagreeable. He talked in a loud tone, and boasted to his companion of his anticipated conquests in the field of beauty.

He had given a dinner that day, and these two alone remained sober, or rather not so inebriate as their fellows, who one after another had been led by mocking servants to their rooms.

"What! now you—you—are to be married in a month, my lord?' said his bottle companion, a poor, college toady, who worshiped wealth and rank, and was mean enough to be the shadow of his patron!"

"Bah! I marry for fashion's sake, and to unite the broad acres of Lady Emma to my own domains. She is a beauty, too, and I shall be proud of possessing her, and showing her about in London! Besides, you know I shall win a cool ten thousand on her!"

"Ah, indeed, my noble lord!" ejaculated the sycophant, sipping his wine, but not daring to drink deep, as his "noble master" had commanded him to keep sober, and look after *him*, if he should succumb!

"Lord Tom Berkley bet me a cool ten I could not win her!"

"Ha, ha, he, he! You've *won* the *cup* there, my lord! A good pun, eh?"

"A deuced *bad* one! But I have him for half his income! This will pay for Lady Emma's trousseau!"

"Wine and wassail, that is my motto," said Mr. Fispet, a little tipsily, swinging his glass quite irreverently, both as to the act and his quotation. "You don't drink, my lord! Let me fill your glass?"

"Aye, but let us drink to the three *w*'s!"

"What are they, Harry?"

"*Sir?*" thundered out the young noble, glaring upon his humbled companion.

"Beg ten million pardons, my noble lord! Didn't mean to call you so familiarly! When the wine 's in the wit 's out! I was a fool, you see!"

"Yes, a precious fool! The three *w*'s are—

"'Woman, wine and wassail!'"

"Good, excellent, bravo!"

In his excitement, and wishing to atone for his undue familiarity, Mr. Fispet actually rose and stood with one foot on his chair and the other upon the table, and drank the toast with a "Hip-pip-hurrah!" in response to which Lord Harry Wincup dashed his glass upon the board, saying that it was broad day, and time "for honest folk to be in bed."

The nobleman (not the noble man) then leaned on the shoulder of Fispet and reeled out of the banquet-hall. A few moments after their disappearance Mr. Fispet stole in again, and going to the wine poured out and drank several glasses rapidly and with a stealthy air, as if to make up for his forced bibous abstinence.

"Thinks I'm a f-f-ool! my lor' does! I'm wise e-e-nough to f-f-feather my own nest, I am! Fispet is not the f-first w-wise fellow that has p-p-played the fool for his own ends! Eh! This house is 'mazing unsteady on its foundations! How it moves up and down, and round and round! There go the table and decanters in a circle about me, faster and faster and f-f-fas——"

And down Mr. Fispet fell upon the floor, after in vain stretching out his hands to grasp some object to steady him.

Lord Harry Wincup prided himself on never getting so drunk that he could not walk! Great nerve and powers of endurance were his boast and pride.

After Fispet had left him at the door of his room, he entered it and was about to cast himself upon his bed when through the window he saw a beautiful young woman in the park below, talking and wringing her hands, and apparently in the deepest distress.

Her singular loveliness, enhanced by her tears and grief, alone impressed him. He went towards the casement and looked out. She was talking with the porter.

"What is it?" called the nobleman.

"Her husband, one of the tenants, has been taken to jail, my lord, for debt, and——"

"Send her up here, George!" said the young lord. "I will hear her story and perhaps can relieve her."

With a hesitating step she followed the porter in, who conducted her to a room adjoining the apartment from the window of which Lord Wincup had seen her. He went in to speak to her, while the porter closing the door retired.

"Ah, a deuced beautiful creature!" soliloquized the half-inebriated nobleman, as he drew near her as she stood with her apron to her eyes, at a moderate distance from him. "What is the trouble, my love!"

"My husband was owing the shopkeeper, but being long ill was not able to pay, and this morning was carried off to prison, my lord. I did not know what to do; but as you are the landlord of my husband, my lord, I came to you!"

"You did perfectly right. I am charmed to see you! What is your husband's name?"

"William Eaton."

"Then you are the pretty Mary Eaton I've heard of! I am glad to see you, Mary! I'll do what I can! Don't spoil those beautiful eyes by weeping. Dry up your tears! I will have William out of jail before the sun now just rising sets!"

"Oh, my lord, you are too good! William told me *not* to come to you. But I would not heed him; for I knew you would help him! for has not God placed you in authority over us to do us good and be our best friend?"

"I am your best friend, my sweet Mary——"

As he spoke he laid his hand upon her fair shoulder, from which in her hurry to come to the castle she had lost the kerchief. She shrunk from beneath his touch, and the roue-ish glance of his eyes, and retreated a few steps.

"Pardon me, my lord," she said, blushing and humbly, yet firmly, "I am a married wife!"

"Not the less lovely, maid or wife! Nay, do not fly! Nor, mark me, do not trifle with me, or your husband may stay in jail longer than you think! I am not in the humor to be thwarted. Give me a kiss, and I will pay you the money in hand to release your husband, my under game-keeper. The fellow has no right to keep such a sweet doe in my preserves all to himself!"

"My lord, I can not consent to what would displease William! You do wrong to ask me what I have no power to bestow; for a wife's lips are sacred to her husband!"

"Do not preach to me with your pretty lips, child! I will kiss you, will you, nill you!"

As he spoke he advanced to clasp her in his arms, when she darted past him. In doing so he caught her by the arm. As she released her person, he, half tipsy, could not preserve his equilibrium, and reeling, pitched headlong to the floor!

The next moment the young wife fled the room, and in a few seconds might have been seen flying across the green, towards the forest, in the depths of which was her lonely and deserted home. Lord Wincup was hurt by the fall, and with a bleeding wound in his temples, caused by falling upon the corner of a chair, he staggered to his bed, and rung for his servant, with deep and bitter curses upon his tongue.

SCENE II.

THE YOUNG ARTIST AND THE WIDOW.

Ten years have elapsed and we present to our readers the second scene of our little drama.

In the door of the porch of a picturesque cottage, shaded by overhanging forest trees, and situated by a running brook that wound through a noble forest ere it gurgled past its door, clear and sparkling, sat a young widow; for such her attire showed her to be.

The paleness of a mourning heart for the loved husband of her youth, had not withered the exquisite tone of her beauty. There was about her an air of soft refinement and sweetness, which Sorrow's pencil can alone lend to female loveliness; yet the grace of her charms was rustic, not courtly. She was a modest daisy of the vale, not a flaunting dahlia of the green-house of fashion.

She was engaged in knitting a pair of boy's hose.

Behind her, within the door, sat a boy of ten years upon a low cricket, with a pencil in his hand and a smooth piece of board before him. He was engaged in making a clever drawing of his mother as she sat, with a look of pleased consciousness at his occupation!

The boy is the mother's likeness fashioned by the Divine Hand, and to which the pencil of health has lent the roseate tints, which care and sorrow have driven from the maternal cheeks.

His fine attitude as he bends backward to catch the delicate lines of her features, the spirited head with its curling brown locks, his bright black eyes alight with the inspiration of true genius, the noble air of his countenance, all constitute in themselves such a picture as Raphael might have painted of himself in his boyhood, in his happiest moments.

"A little to the left, mother! Now bend your forehead—not too much!—very slightly! There—that is right! Oh, how beautiful you are, dear mother!"

The mother smiled, but sighed.

"Beauty, Charles," she said sadly, "is not to be coveted in one in my position of life! To the poor, beauty is often a source of misery! Had I been less lovely I might now have been a happy wife instead of a widow!"

"Ah, mother, beauty is a glorious and wonderful gift! Forms of beauty and color are my joy and delight! I could not love the ill-formed or the plain! I love to sit and imagine a world ten thousand times more beautiful than this! You don't know what lovely scenes, splendid cities, gorgeous birds, brilliant skies, lovely flowers, that do not exist, I create by thinking! When I am a man I will be a painter, and then you will see what beautiful pictures I will paint that I shall take out of my thoughts!"

"You have too much imagination, dear Charles! You must be a poor man! You are not born to be a great man!"

"I will *make* myself great then, mother," cried the lad, with the light of the star of fame kindling in his glance. "When Lord Wincup returns from India, I will ask him to send me to school where——"

"Do not talk of my lord!" said Mary Eaton. "I pray he may never return! You are old enough to hear what I wish to say! and discreet enough to keep it. It is my duty to undeceive you. Think not of my lord! He is my enemy as he was your father's!"

"Then he shall be mine, were he twenty lords! Why was he father's?"

"Because he is a wicked and powerful man. He took dislike to William and persecuted him, and finally, by artfully getting him entrapped into a position where he appeared to have been guilty of poaching, he had him imprisoned on false accusation. It broke poor William's heart; and your father died five years ago in prison."

"I will kill Lord Wincup!" cried the lad springing to his feet and clenching his pencil as if it were a dagger.

"Nay; God is his Judge! Let us leave vengeance with him!"

"I wish I were a man! I will revenge myself on him! He shall be twice judged; here and before God!"

"Charles! This is wild talk and sinful!" The lad bowed his head in submission to her reproof; but his eyes were full of the hot tears of passion.

"Forgive me, mother!" he said, kissing her hand. "But why do we live here on his lands?"

"I have no other home!"

"When I get large you shall have one, dear mother!"

"I know it, my noble child! But this is the only shelter earth affords us; and by the kindness of your uncle Walter, William's brother, who is now the under-keeper in your father's place. But do not speak to him about this; for he does not understand or believe my lord's hatred of William! He believes his brother was really guilty!"

"But he was *not!*"

"No; and this Lord Wincup well knows; and Heaven may yet cause him to do your father's memory justice!"

"I will make him when I am a man! Who said this wicked lord was coming home?"

"The steward! You know my lord went to India with his regiment, and has been raised to some high post there, so he has been away for five years. But he has left the army and is to come home to reside. He may be here to-day. But be careful, Charles, and do not anger him!"

"Why not?"

"Because it will be dangerous to your safety."

"I don't care for my safety!"

"Then care for mine! It will injure me!"

"For your sake, then, I will forbear," he answered. "But I hope he won't come home."

"Finish my picture, Charles! It is pleasanter drawing than talking about such a disagreeable subject."

The lad resumed his pencil and had just completed an admirable likeness of his mother, when a gentleman with two out-riders dashed up along the forest road. Charles ran to the door to see who they were, as his mother, hastily rising to hasten in, exclaimed with terror—

"It is Lord Wincup!"

"Nay, but this is fair Mary Eaton," cried the sun-browned Indian soldier as he drew rein at the door before she could get in from the porch. "Do not fly me, Mary! By the rood! But time has only mellowed your beauty. Salute me; for I have been long away, and now you are a widow and your sweet lips are your own!"

"My lord, I hoped that time had changed you for the better! Excuse me—I must retire! Come in, Charles!"

"That lad is yours, I see by his brow and eye! a spirited boy! What hast thou in thy hand, my man? A drawing, eh?" he exclaimed, as bending from his saddle he took it from the young artist's hand. "Rough, but faithful! A good transcript of thy fair features, Mary! I shall prize it! Here, lad, take this gold and leave me the picture!"

As the nobleman spoke, he cast a doubloon to the ground, and pressing his lips to the picture's, said—

"I' faith, but if I may not have the substance, I'll e'en put up with the shadow, hoping better things in store for me by-and-by—eh, fair widow?"

The young woman's cheek burned with modest anger, and without a word she was retiring when she saw her son leap upon the stirrup of the rider, snatch the picture from his hand and spring back with it to the porch steps, where, stopping only to impress his own lips upon the spot where the noble's had been touched, he fled into the cottage, closing the door behind him.

"A mettled youth," said Lord Wincup, turning to Mr. Fispet, who accompanied him, now somewhat changed by years and climate outwardly, yet inwardly my lord's toady and tool.

"Shall I alight and chastise him with my whip, my lord?" he cried.

"No, not now. I have other revenge in mind. Come to my side, and let us talk while we ride on."

The two men then conversed together in a low tone, in which Mary Eaton's name was mentioned repeatedly, and after a mile had been traversed, they came in sight of the castle, to which, after an absence of five years, its lord was now first returning.

SCENE III.

THE TYRANNY OF POWER.

The earl had been two months back at his castle, the best part of which time he had spent in fruitless attempts to destroy the honor and peace of the lonely widow of his victim William. Descriptions of lustful violence are not to our taste, and we enter into no details. His arts, his force, his power were all foiled, and he vowed vengeance. It was necessary he should so obtain it as to conceal from the public eye the true motive. By his command, the brother George was sent to another estate as forester. The widow was permitted to remain until a quarter's rent had accumulated. On that day Lord Wincup, accompanied by his shadow, Fispet, and six men of his laborers, rode over to the cottage of Mary Eaton.

By his orders the furniture was taken out and carted off to be sold for the rent, and the house unroofed. The widow and her son, driven from the doors, took shelter from a storm that suddenly came up, under an oak. Lord Wincup sat by in his saddle, with a stern visage, and superintended the whole despoliation. Fispet, eager to go beyond his master, drove her from the tree-shelter.

"Now, woman, who might have shared a room in my halls, and been served on silver, and been gaily attired, let thy virtue supply these things, and find thee a roof! Off from my estate, you and your brat, and if I ever find either of you on a foot of my land again, I will put you both in the stocks!"

Thus speaking, in a menacing manner that was in keeping with his words, he spurred away from the scene of outrage to find covert from the storm, which now raged, accompanied by angry lightnings, and heavy, reverberating peals of thunder.

Heaven is not pitiless. There is One stronger than man. The widow and her son found shelter in a woodman's hut that night, and the next day the curate of the next parish received them into his hospitable home. Here the mother found constant employment, and the promising young artist was sent to school, where his talents and genius and noble nature won him many friends. But he never forgot the scene of his mother's and his own ejectment from their cottage. It seemed engraven on his mind and memory in every detail as with a pen of iron. At the age of twenty he was taken under the patronage of Sir Thomas Lawrence, and became his favorite pupil. In his twenty-sixth year he had won fame by a life-like portrait of the Duke of Sussex, and a landscape from his pencil (for he was as skillful as a landscape artist as in portraits) won the third prize at the Royal Academy. His name was now become known at court, and his fame as an artist of the first degree established.

Let us penetrate to his studio, or rather *atelier*. He has upon his easel a head of the Great Duke, for which the hero of Waterloo has given two sittings; yet already the resemblance is wonderful, and strikingly characteristic. Two or three friends, noblemen and artists are present, conversing with him as he paints. From the beauty of his person, the manly carriage of his head, his air of self-poise and independence, he looks the superior nobleman of them all. He feels the conscious power of genius, which, in itself, ennobles the whole man. He is the petted and lionized painter of the day. Prince Albert has not only sat to him, but dined with him at his own table. Of course all the nobility regard him as socially their equal. Yet he has the modest air of genius, as well as the spirit of its lofty pride.

One of the young lords jestingly says—

"Charles, do you know I am dying with woman's curiosity to know what picture engages your attention behind that brown curtain. Your friends say it is the portrait of your lady-love."

Over the face of the artist passed a slight cloud, but he banished it with a smile, and said—

"It is for the Prince Albert Exhibition!"

"A mystery?"

"Yes—till then!" was the answer, in a tone so peculiar that no further questions were ventured.

In the meanwhile Lord Wincup had risen to eminence as a politician, for a man's private crimes and personal corruption, if he be rich and great, do not intermingle with his public position in Europe; but these discrepancies will no doubt be all corrected in "the new heavens and new earth wherein shall dwell righteousness."

He had not only his hereditary seat in the House of Lords, but was the leader of a new party, and was spoken of for the new ministry. His name was prominent before all men, and when his "great speech" was reported in the "Times," and read by thousands, it did not reveal Mary Eaton and her wrongs. He had probably forgotten her and his revenges. But it has been said by a wise man, that all men will sooner or later again meet their misdeeds face to face, that either here or in eternity we shall all meet our earth-life again. Happy he who fears not to encounter it. Lord Wincup now sought everywhere popularity. His hat was lifted to men he despised, and to the poor and humble, to the base and groveling, that he might be all things to all men, and "so gain some."

Charles Eaton, the great artist, in the meantime went on painting in secret the mysterious picture which had so excited the curiosity of his friends. His mother was living with him in London in secure independence, and proud and happy in the fame of her son, who had in truth fulfilled his promise "to give her a home when he should be a man." Will his threat to be avenged on Lord Wincup be as literally accomplished?

We will wait and see.

SCENE IV.

THE REVENGE AND PUNISHMENT.

The reader is transported to the Prince Albert Gallery—an especial public exhibition for the purpose of giving an opportunity to all artists, foreign and native, to compete for prizes and honors.

The vast hall is crowded with the nobility and fashion.

What picture are so many assembled before, eager to gaze upon it? and what remarks of surprise, and recognition, and wonder, fly thus from lip to lip! Others press forward to see and hear, until the picture—a large landscape of a forest scene, and a cottage with figures—becomes the central object of attention.

A group of gentlemen are just entering. It is Prince Albert, accompanied by the Duke and members of the House of Lords. The Prince at the moment is talking with the bright, particular star of the day, Lord Wincup, who is in high spirits, and proud of the distinguished regard paid to him so publicly by his Royal Highness.

As they slowly advanced, the Prince said:

"There seems to be an unusually attractive painting, my Lord. Let us approach."

"With pleasure, your Royal Highness."

At their approach the crowd gave back, but with such peculiar and significant glances at Lord Wincup, that he would have believed that they were noticing him with more honor than the Queen Consort but for an expression in their eyes that he did not like. He heard his name in fifty voices, but took it for homage. He was so taken up with bowing to the crowd that he did not look at the picture. His attention was drawn to it by the Prince.

"Bless me, my Lord, who has painted this piece! What a likeness!"

"Perfect! It is he himself," uttered a score of voices. "What can it mean?"

Lord Wincup looked at the picture. It was a scene as large as the life. Before him, to his horror and amazement, he beheld the forest on his estate, the cottage of the widow, which some men were unroofing, while others were carrying out the furniture. He beheld *himself*, seated upon his horse, gazing as he actually gazed upon the scene of outrage. The form of the widow and of her son, portraits to the life, were seen as Fispet (a speaking likeness) was driving them from beneath the sheltering tree. The heavens in the picture were black with a tempest, and across the scene flashed lurid lightnings, which illuminated the ferocious face of the chief actor in the scene. The whole picture was eloquent, and told its own story.

The Earl of Wincup stood before it, pale, and trembling in every limb. It seemed to him as if a page from the Doom's-day book had been torn out, and presented to his appalled gaze beforehand. To steady himself he actually caught at the arm of the Prince Royal. It seemed no picture, but the reality itself.

"What means this, my Lord?" said the Prince.

"I know not! Some enemy hath done this!" he stammered; and so greatly was he overwhelmed with confusion and shame, that he lost his self-command and sunk insensible to the floor.

At this every one cried:

"There is *something* in it! Who can solve it?"

SCENE V.

THE DENOUEMENT.

The artist, Charles Eaton, sat at his easel, when a visitor was announced.

It was Lord Wincup!

He had guessed the unknown artist, for the catalogue had not revealed his name. He entered humbly and suppliantly, for the Prince had believed the tale the picture had told the world, and the Queen had demanded of the nobleman an explanation.

"I have come, Sir Charles," (we forgot to say that he had been knighted by the Queen for his genius,) he said, "to ask you what amount I shall pay you for your picture in the exhibition."

"It cannot be purchased, my Lord. Revenge is dear, dearer than gold!" And the artist went on with his work.

"I will give you ten thousand pounds to withdraw it from the exhibition!" said the Earl, pale as death.

"It is placed there by the committee, and must remain for the whole period of the season."

"Sir Charles Eaton, have pity upon me! You have had your revenge by brooding for years upon that accursed picture in your heart, till your hand had the skill to transfer it from your memory to the canvass. Remove it, sir, and I will give you double my offer!"

"No, my Lord! The picture was painted for this exhibition."

"Will nothing move you!" cried the Earl, in despair. "If it stands there I am infamous."

"No, sir. It is your judgment. It is but one scene of what will have to meet your eyes of your acts on earth! If you cannot endure to see this revived, how will you stand before the reproduction hereafter of every act of your wicked life!"

The Earl drew a pistol, and shot at the heart of the artist. The ball was flattened against a miniature of his mother, which hung above it. The next moment a second bullet went crashing through the nobleman's forehead by his own hand!

The soul of the intended murderer and suicide was now already on its way to its judgment from that "Book of Remembrance," *one* leaf of which, presented to his gaze on earth, had driven him to despair.

It was said in the papers that the Earl had died of apoplexy. The Prince alone knew the whole secret. The public gossiped, and once truly, that the ambitious Earl's true character having been exposed by the painting, he had committed suicide to escape the scorn of the world's eye.

The next day thousands flocked to the exhibition to see the picture; but it had been removed privately in the night! The son had justly avenged the mother and father, and the picture disappeared forever!

◆

GRANDMOTHERS.

BY GEORGIANNA HERBERT.

Even in a city "Grandmother's House" is a beloved and serene old place, but when it is in the country words fail to describe its deep, deep peace and delightful content. It must be experienced to be understood. To come, after years of struggle, noise, and confusion, after a long and wearing strain upon every bodily and spiritual power, and sit down and uncover your head, and throw off restraint and care, under the roof where you (and your mother before you) danced and played through many an hour of happy childhood, is, indeed, like entering "into rest." It is enough to make one, weary with the contest of life, wish to remain hid forever from the world, abiding for a few serene, unclouded years beside the comforter of one's infancy, comforting *her* until her journey ends, and then lie contentedly down beside her and share her sleep. You look upon her, the dear old saint, standing so near the land of glory that its beauty shines about her, and its gentleness and love are in all she does and says, and you wish, oh! so sincerely, that *your* work were as nearly over and as *well done* as hers.

The aged are a marvel to the young. How far backward they can look; and how strange it is to be able to look back so far.

"Tell me a story, Grandmother. Make believe that I am a child again—that I never left your side. Make believe that this dear old house, and the scenes about it, that your form and face, and the faces and forms that here were wont to assemble, are *all* that my heart and memory hold; that no cares haunt me, that no thoughts fly out and go seeking otherwhere for their objects; that no wishes and yearnings reach beyond this blue horizon, and that the heart which beats once more beside dear grandma, the heart that a few years ago was that of a simple-minded and unworldly child, is *not* bound by any bonds to distant and far different places and people. Tell me a story, Grandmother." And your Grandmother pushes up her "specs" and takes her knitting, and says, looking at you with a pleased and happy smile—

"Well, child, I will"—and then follows relations of wars with the red-coats and the Indians, of old forts in the fields about, of old-fashioned ways of living; of what a fine, gentlemanly man your grandfather was—of how his ships went down at sea, and his houses went *up* in the war, and of the many ways by which you, the descendant of wealthy ancestors, came to be a poor, portionless, and houseless child.

Oh! Grandmother! to some thou art the *last* tie that binds the heart to all the sacred influences of childhood, and when thy life is over and thy home desolate, *such* will be cut loose forever from their early life, and left floating up and down, up and down, in restless and unsatisfied endeavor, until *they* too are overtaken and quieted by That which giveth final rest. Oh! Grandmother, waiting a moment in the border land, joyful to thee will be the hour of thy departure, but to us it will be most grievous.

◆

ANTI-CHRISTIAN.

The more you educate and polish man's intellect, unless his moral nature be kept equally under improving influences, the more like Satan you make him; for Lucifer is intellectual and well educated; without doubt, too, he has a superior refinement of his own; he is aristocratic and proud; and the spirit of exclusiveness and stand-aside-for-I-am-better-than-thouism, comes altogether from him.

Christianity builds no walls; it is no aristocrat, but a leveler, (not by *casting down*, buy by *lifting up*,) in its very essence. It knows no distinction except between right and wrong, and acknowledges but two classes—the righteous and the wicked. The spirit which regards as best and most worthy of notice that which is peculiar to the few, and which looks with *less* interest and regard on that which affects the many, is anti-Christian. The spirit that would elevate the few at the expense of the many; that is more respectful to Classes than it is to Humanity, is from *beneath*. So are all men, all books, all papers, let their pretensions be what they may, whose influence is for Classes rather than for Humanity. How many could be called by name—men refined out of all naturalness, polished out of all steadfastness, educated out of all humanity, who call themselves Christians, yet make it manifest in all that they utter or perform that they are profoundly ignorant of the first principles of the Gospel of Christ.

It is a fact that the works of bold and open Infidelity are not so much to be dreaded as are the insidious influences of polite and exclusive Anti-Christ which goes regularly to worship in the holy temple; but is not to be caught, even there, near to a sinner of "the lower classes."

By so much as deeply rooted pride is worse than transient passion, by so much as settled scorn and contempt are worse than momentary anger, and by so much as heartlessness is worse than a heart untrained, is the spirit of refined selfishness worse and more hopeless than the roughness and vulgarity of the unrefined masses.

◆

THE SENSATIONS OF YOUTH.

The sensations peculiar to youth, being the result of impulse rather than reflection, have the advantage over those of manhood, however the pride of reason may give the latter the superiority. In manhood there is always a burden of thought bearing on the wheels of enjoyment. In manhood, too, we have the misfortune of seeing the wrecks of early associations scattered every where around us. Youth can see nothing of this. It can take no review of antecedent pleasures or pains that become such a source of melancholy emotion in mature years. It has never sauntered through the rooms of a building, and recalled early days spent under its roof. Our early recollections are pleasing to us because they look not on the morrow. Alas! what did that morrow leave when it became merged in the past!

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AN ARTICLE FOR PARENTS.

The education of the mind has come to be regarded, in our country, as a universal necessity. We believe that all men—and each individual man—ought to be educated; that our liberties depend on the proper education of the people, and the sound and enlightened public opinion thus formed; that every human mind ought to be educated as much as possible; that the immortal powers bestowed by our Creator cannot be developed too much, or range too widely the limitless realm of knowledge; and that it is the bounden duty of those who possess these blessings, to aid others in their attainment. Such principles as these, of whose truth we are well persuaded, and which we are in the constant habit of asserting, with reference to the education of the mind, apply in a far higher sense to the education of the heart, and enforce with tenfold power the duty of religious instruction. The former is not complete without the latter; for a system which educates a human soul for time, and ignores all preparation for eternity, is without doubt, at once imperfect and unnatural. But, in a truer view of the matter, mental training without moral culture is positively dangerous, and possibly destructive. Some men glorify Mind and Reason, as if they were almost gods to be worshiped; and talk of Education, as if it were the only and adequate regenerating power of the world and the human race. The truth is, education alone is an insufficient moral basis; it must be sanctified by divine truth, or it will become a curse instead of a blessing. To store the memory with knowledge—to train the understanding, to discipline the reason, to draw forth all the wondrous energies of the human soul—and then have all this perverted to the ruin of the man himself, the injury of his fellow-men, and the hindrance of the cause of Truth in the world—it would have been far better to leave those powers dormant and unseen forever; far better let the ore rust in the mine, than forge a weapon from it for the hand of the evil one.

In the rude block of marble, just brought from the quarry, and ready to be fashioned by the sculptor's chisel, there lie hidden a thousand possible conceptions of beauty or deformity. If the right artist and the right instrument are brought to bear upon it, there may stand forth a face hideous with depravity, malice, and every evil passion, or a countenance glowing with the light of a morning star, and clothed in the loveliness of an inhabitant of heaven. The photographer takes the burnished metallic plate, and prepares it for the impress of the sunlight. But it still remains perfectly optional with him, whether upon that sensitive and receptive surface shall be stamped features so radiant with beauty that the beholder shall gaze upon it with pleasure, and remember it with delight, or lineaments so distorted with passion, and marred with vice and evil, that we shall turn away disgusted from the sight. Just so, in the mind unsubjected as yet to the processes of education, there lie concealed the possibilities of unlimited good and unlimited evil; and just according as holy or unholy instruments do the work, may that soul become an angel or a fiend. So plain is it that, superadded to intellectual culture, we must have moral and religious training.

CROAKERS.

The prognostication of evil and universal destruction seems to be a pleasant business for some people. At any rate, they never do anything else. They are always shaking their heads and sniveling over the "evil tendencies of the age." A murder or a defalcation is to them a positive sign that creation is on the eve of "bursting up," or "caving in," or both. They can see no signs of promise in the innumerable activities and developments of the age. All is blear, and blank, and cheerless to them. They are simply perambulating masses of musty logubriosity. They are the most pestilent of social pests, and should be exterminated. This is no retrogressive age. It is full of life, progress, and goodness. It is rich in present fruitage and glorious with future promise.

THE BENCH AND THE PRESS.

It is impossible to consider some of our law proceedings, and to escape being struck with the soreness of feeling which is displayed in them, by the dispensers of the justice of the country, towards whatever concerns the press. Its excesses, instead of being regarded as the overflowings of a pure and vivifying stream, bearing health and refreshment through the land—here and there perhaps causing a trifling mischief, but fertilizing and rendering productive the whole surface of the country—are used as arguments against the thing itself. There is a uniform tendency to say something injurious respecting it on the most trivial opportunity available for the purpose—and that something generally grounded on the most untenable reasoning—as if the press were the declared enemy of the profession and practice of Law. There seems a constant wish to master its free spirit, and to confine it to the most narrow and petty regulations. Could those who indulge in their vituperations against the press carry the matter in their own way, nothing would ever be allowed to appear in print but what was literally provable on oath.

The examination of public men and their measures, the pursuit of truth, the arraignment of evils too subtle for the coarser bonds of an act of the legislature to restrain, must cease at the dictum of lawyers, and free discussion be chained to the formalities of the most narrowing and self-consequential of human pursuits. This disposition is partly generated by the opposite characters of the press and of the law. Law belongs more immediately to human action—to deed, and not to thought. The press belongs to mind and to imagination, and is not to be judged of as we judge of fact. It is within the empire of intellect, and its range cannot be defined by statute, nor its errors and mistakes rectified by human jurisprudence, though an excess of one particular character may. The errors of the press can only be subdued by the operation of reason and moral feeling. Law is a very limited empire as respects mind: that of the press is boundless. The lawyer is a mere expounder of the institutions of the legislator: he is his agent to effect certain limited objects. It is not his business to listen to nor act upon the suggestions of genius, nor always even of sound reason. Written laws confine him to the very letter of his duty. How can it be expected he should be otherwise than he is, when life is too short for him to penetrate through the cloud of involution and perplexity in which the study of his own profession has been laboriously enveloped?

The power of the press is also an object of his envy. Its property of influencing large bodies of men, of moving mankind *en masse*, is viewed with jealousy; and as it is one of the safeguards of liberty, it has a tendency to enlarge instead of restrain; a quality the very reverse of law. It can, therefore, hardly be wondered at, that some feeling of antipathy should be shown towards it, arising from the habits as well as ambition of lawyers. But it by no means follows that it is prudent to exhibit it on every occasion.

THE BEST DINNER SAUCE.

"At dinner," says Pliny in one of his letters, "if I have only my wife or a few friends with me, *some author is read to us*; and after dinner we have music."

Reading at table would perhaps hardly suit us moderns. We are so shy of pedantry that we sometimes prefer stupid and wearisome frivolity to the least appearance of it. But something might be done to redeem from utter inanity and waste the not inconsiderable time we pass at table. Let us see. One hour at dinner, and a half hour each at breakfast and tea, is not much if any above the average, even with us Americans, notorious as we are, with the rest of the world, for *bolting* our half-masticated food, and hurrying off to work again. That is two hours a day, two days and a half in the month, and *a whole month in the year!* In other words, one-twelfth of our time is spent at the table, and that, too, taken from the very best of our time. This time is by no means to be looked upon as thrown away. Repose, cheerful talk, the mutual interchange of minute good offices, all are good, good for the mind and heart, while they help the digestion, and so benefit the physical man. They polish the manners, improve the utterance, awaken thought, and actualize, on a small scale, M. Vattemaire's scheme, effecting a sort of *inter-individual exchanges.*

All this intercourse at table brings about unconsciously, and, to some extent, inevitably. But it might do so in a much higher degree, by a tone of conversation at once elevated, various and cheerful, and the more elevated, of course the more various and cheerful. Everybody remembers the remark of a foreigner who dined one day with Plato. "Plato's dinners are very pleasant at the time, and they *aste well the day after.*"

Much depends on the starting of good topics. By no means after the fashion of Dr. Blimber, who used to *choke* his boys at dinner with a thesis on Roman antiquities. The thing must be done in a free and easy way. Mr. Wilberforce used to pass for one of the most graceful and delightful talkers in England. Madame de Stael said he was absolutely the most fascinating Englishman she had ever met with. He has let us into the secret of the matter in his diary. To occupy his position in society as a frequent entertainer and guest, and yet to "redeem the time," was with him a matter of considerable reflection. He used to prepare *launchers*, as he called them—subjects of fresh and stirring interest, to be projected on the company at table, and lift up the conversation out of that wretched *niaiserie* into which it is apt to fall, even among cultivated people. So that the brilliant and animated talk which charmed the gay but highly gifted Frenchwoman, was, like Sheridan's wit, and other admirable "dinner-sauce," as Hood calls it, more the result of premeditation than it seemed.

AIM HIGH.

It is the aim that makes the man. Without an aim a man is nothing, as far as the utter destitution of force, weight, and even individuality among men can reduce him to nonentity. The strong gusts and currents of the world sweep him this way and that, without steam or sails to impel, or helm to guide him. If he is not speedily wrecked or run aground, it is "more by good luck than good management." We have never heard a more touching confession of utter weakness and misery than these words from one singularly blest with the endowments of nature and of providence—"My life is aimless!" Take heed, young man, of an *aimless* life. Take heed, too, of a low and sordid aim. A well ascertained and generous *purpose* gives vigor, directness, and perseverance to all man's efforts. A well-disciplined intellect, character, influence, tranquility, and cheerfulness within, success and honor without, are its sure concomitants. Whatever a man's talents and advantages may be, with no aim, or a low one, he is weak and despicable; and he cannot be otherwise than respectable and influential with a high one.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

A LEAF NOT FROM THE "BOOKS OF THE OPERA."

You might as well set me down for a heathen, for I don't like the opera, and what is more, I don't believe half the people who say that they do, else why do they laugh and whisper through the performance, and twist their moustaches into horny shapes, and settle their bracelets, and arrange their shawls and make eyes, and do anything but what they profess to come there for—viz., to listen to the music. It is all a sham; they go there because it is a good place to show off—because there are handsome men and pretty women there—because it is the fashion. Shall I like a thing merely because 'tis the fashion? Shall I sit in a vapor bath in one torturing posture from seven o'clock till twelve, at the mercy of the cramp, for fashion? It is all very well for gentlemen who run out between the acts, and come in wiping their satisfied lips so provokingly, to ask, "Why not stand up in these intervals?" It is not so agreeable to have a dozen impertinent lorgnettes leveled at you, to hear your name handed from mouth to mouth, and your genealogy, from Adam down, discussed in your hearing by your well-bred neighbors. Some people diligently study the "books of the opera" to find out what all the deafening racket is about. I never touch one. If the music is good for anything, I take it, it will tell its own story, and if it is not, it is bad enough to be forced to listen to it, without boring yourself to read what it is *intended* to do. I have been to the opera when the music appealed to me; when my heart stood still, lest I should lose a note; when I was dying to throw my arms round somebody's neck—(not *anybody's*)—and cry for sheer ecstacy. That's what I call music; but that's only a delicious parenthesis I occasionally get there at the cost of a seven hours' sit. But a slam-bang crash, an ear-splitting squeal; eyes turned inside out; mouth twisted under the ears; fat, red-faced prima-donnas *trying to get out of their gowns at the top*—I will none of it, especially when it takes till day-light to get from Fourteenth street back to my pillow in Brooklyn.

Spite of that, I maintain that I love music. I can't sing a note—more's the pity. I can't prate about "Verdi," and "Rossini," and "Bellini," and all the other *ninnys*, but I like a baby's laugh; I like a brook's ripple; I like the shivering leaf-music in the tall tree-tops in the woods; I like the spirit-voices in the starry midnight; but I *don't* want my ears deafened, and my eyes put out, and my enthusiasm bottled up to be uncorked to the order of the Academy of Music in Fourteenth street, *whether or no*. In short, I don't like the opera one time in ten. There—now you have it.

Fanny Fern.

DID YOU EVER SEE THEM?

There are people who get up in the morning for the express purpose of making somebody uncomfortable before the day is out. They generally pitch upon some sunny-faced, happy, singing human lark, caroling high above the ditches and marshes of life, soaring in the blue ether of his happiness, nearer God and the angels than he himself knows anything about, and taking practiced aim at some vulnerable point, bring him plump down, with maimed wing, to flutter in the dust. Now what is good enough for such a miscreant? The more you flutter the better he likes it; every writhe of your agonized spirit is delicious music to this vulture; there is one other person in the world as uncomfortable as himself. What right had *you* to be happy when *his* liver was out of order? It was clearly a piece of impertinent presumption, and so there you lie moaning and turning, the sunshine all gone, the chill mist of despondence gathering thick about you, and your persecutor standing by, turning you over now and then with his foot, to see if there is life enough left for a fresh attack.

You have seen just such, I dare say; smooth-faced, plausible wretches, bowing and smirking you into the hottest purgatory. Now an honest enemy I know how to meet; but your malicious, mealy-mouthed, Watts'-Psalms-and-Hymns wretch, who takes your hand with his velvety palm, only to tell you that your pulse is wrong, and that your father died at your age—I wonder if there *is* salvation for such?

Fanny Fern.

TOO MUCH LATIN.

Not in its place, for the Latin is a noble language. It is "out of place," that we have too much Latin—particularly in the forms and pleadings of law, and in the nomenclature and practice of medicine. Indeed, there is no more pedantic and hurtful use of learning, than that which mars universal literature by interspersing it with "foreign phrases," unintelligible and provoking to the ordinary reader, and generally unexplained by note or comment. And Latin is the language in which this offense is chiefly committed. Scarcely an orator or an author, on any occasion omits this obnoxious interlarding, and the "learned professions," so called, practice it still more abundantly, evidently to keep up the pretentious dignity and mystery of their vocations. It is not only a method for confusing, but also for defrauding the mass of mankind. We are willing to stand a *modicum* of Latin, but we object to being uselessly bored with it in every "learned book," and taxed on account of it by every learned practitioner.

PRIZE FIGHTS.

A prize fight is not the worst thing in the world—more's the pity. It even has its advantages and blessings for decent people hereabouts. It for a time relieves the city of much of its ruffianism. Concealed deadly weapons are removed to a distance pleasant to contemplate. It gives our country friends a chance to see our vice-reeking rowdies, and to note their horrid obscenity and blasphemousness, and thereby prepares the country members of the Legislature for the enactment of stringent laws. As for the pommeling received by the combatants, every decent man should rejoice thereat; and the "brutal scene," about which we hear so much, never hurts anybody's morals or deadens anybody's sensibilities, simply because nobody who has any morals or sensibility ever goes near said "brutal scene."

DRESS YOUR CHILDREN WARM.

This is one of the most dangerous seasons for children. Colds and coughs are now easily fastened upon them, often resulting in consumption and premature death. Therefore, dress them warm. Let their necks and throats be well protected. Let your boys' pantaloons reach to the instep. Don't dress them in monkey trowsers reaching only to the knee or middle of the leg, and leaving their limbs exposed to the chilling air. Do not sacrifice your children's health to the gratification of a circus rider's taste; but dress them with the paramount view of comfort and safety.

WINTER AND ITS WANTS.

Goldenly as the Autumn may ride out its career, the cold, biting Winter will as surely come as ever, and is even now close at hand. Winter, shutting out the fair scene of green fields and mottled woods, the brooklet and the bird-song, and all the gay belongings of the seed-time and harvest seasons. And with its vailing of the earth's "milder loveliness," Winter will bring new wants to all, and a time of sore suffering to the poor. Many who are now comfortable in the sunshine, subsisting on chances and charities, careless of the morrow, will soon find a subtle and bitter foe in the "nipping frost," and sleet and snow—and will have to creep shivering to whatever shelter may offer.

Multitudes, the world over, can by no foresight escape the severer burthens of Winter; but there are other mulitudes, whose improvidence during the kindlier seasons makes the Winter doubly severe. All such, if they were wise, would imitate the "busy bee" and the provident squirrel, which improve the days of sunshine and fruitage, and comfortable toil, to hedge themselves against the waste and barrenness of Winter. But the improvident are not given to wisdom; their common proverb is, "sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." Their knowledge of what must come, is no warning, so long as they are not absolutely driven to the wall; then all their repentance and regrets are unavailing. It is a strange fact, that the poorer classes, everywhere, are the least forethoughtful and provident. It would seem often as though a blind, passive fatalism was the inspiration of their lives.

But such being the inevitable case, it the more behoves all those who are habitually taxed, or called by sympathy to aid the poor and suffering, to so arrange and distribute their aid that it may most ease the pinch of want and do the greatest good. In our city there is an endless call upon benevolence, as well as an onerous tax upon property, in behalf of poverty and mendicity, and it is to the honor of humanity that the call is most bountifully answered. No community supports public, or practices private charity, more generously than ours—not only to soften the rigors of Winter, but through all seasons of the year. But there is much of our benevolent aid that might be more effectively rendered, with no more cost and but little more trouble to the givers. Let each who aids help the needy within his or her immediate vicinity, of whose real circumstances he or she can be assured. By this course thousands of "professional" and not needy beggars will be foiled. In giving, give money only when food, raiment or fuel will not meet the want. There are too many temptations to misspend the money given in charity. By practising these two rules, or cautions, one-third more real aid may be extended with the same means. Winter is so near, that the consideration of both its wants in reference to the poor is a matter of Christian and human duty.

HEROISM IN LITERATURE.

"Peace hath her victories no less than war," is the far-famed expression of a philanthropic heart and profound mind. The honesty, energy and self-denying course of Sir Walter Scott on the loss of his fortune—a fortune reaped by his incomparable pen—is one of those victories. War does not afford a spectacle of more majesty. After long years of noble toil which had enriched the great author, while it delighted a whole world, he, without a moment's warning, found himself moneyless and landless. A publishing firm, into which he first ventured through motives of benevolence, failed, and Scott was bankrupted. Approaching old age, he had thrown on his shoulders an appaling load of debt, to the amount of six hundred thousand dollars!—not one cent of which had been incurred by any transaction of his own. He declined making any composition with his creditors; he refused any aid from his friends; he would not listen to any donations from the public—that public which he had so long amused, instructed and elevated in mind and morals; but at once gave up his magnificent possessions, and began a new literary career, for the purpose of paying over half-a-million of dollars. He allowed himself not a single hour for recreation, but morning, noon and midnight worked, worked, worked. In a few weeks appeared "Woodstock;" then followed in rapid, almost miraculous, succession, several of his well-known works. Already more than two hundred and fifty thousand dollars were paid. At this rate of working, says one of Scott's most elegant and judicious eulogists, it was evident that the great debt would soon be canceled. But, alas! his frame, sturdy as it was, could not endure the unrelaxing labor. He had a stroke of paralysis. He *must* stop his exertions. The government placed a frigate at his disposal (noble deed) and he went to Italy. But the "golden bowl" was broken, and in less than a year the hero returned to Scotland to die. His last words were:

> "Lockhart, I may have but a minute to speak to you. My dear, be a good man,—be virtuous,—be religious,—be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here."

Brave, glorious, great Walter Scott! how thy grand, true soul passed away like the song of a trumpet, subdued but sublimed by the sweet, sacred and heavenly teachings of thy Divine master!

LABOR.

In that simple word lies the true secret of human success. This is the talisman which solves the mysterious difference between one man's history and another's. The *open sesame* of life is *labor*. Carlyle was not far wrong when he pronounced labor to be the very essence of heroism. One of the ancients went further, and called it the universal conqueror (labor vinat omnia). In the little ant, the slow snail, and the "feeble folk" of the "conies," it supplies the lack of size, speed and strength; and in man, where its operations are directed by light from within and from on high, scarce anything seems impossible to it. Who of us has not seen it begin its undertakings in conflict with every kind of difficulty, gradually but surely master them all, and, though often baffled and defeated, gain at last complete and brilliant success? "The only way," said Doctor Johnson, "to bring anything to pass is *to go doggedly about it.*" Mr. Wilberforce amended the maxim as follows—*to go about it cheerfully, thankfully, with unshaken faith in God, and unflinching perseverance.*

THE ELECTIONS.

The country has recently passed through one of its periodical political excitements, and has come out of the strife just as good as new. We are no politician, and don't care who is President so long as he pays his subscription to the Ledger promptly in advance; and therefore there can be no harm in our congratulating all successful candidates and sympathizing with all the defeated ones, which we hereby do. To the triumphant we would say, wear your triumphs meekly; to the disappointed, bear your defeats philosophically. Our country has room, if not offices, enough for us all, and no honest, industrious man, who keeps out of politics, can very well fail to make a decent living in the land over which the American Eagle screams and flaps his wings.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

The poring pedant, who will slake his thirst *only* from antiquity, will find that it abounds with wells so deep that some of them were not worth the digging, and now so dark that they are not worth the descending, yet so dry withal that he will come up more thirsty than he went down, with eyes blinded by the dust of time, and with lips unquenched by the living waters of truth.

He who pleases himself without injuring his neighbor, is quite as likely to please half the world as he who vainly strives to please the whole of it; he also stands a far better chance of a majority in his favor, since, upon all equal divisions, he will be fairly entitled to his own casting vote.

The Southern Messenger has an article denouncing *Time*, the fierce old spirit of the glass and scythe. A great many rapid writers have *written against time*, and fast men and horses have *run against it*, and almost everybody, we fear, *abuses* it.

The dispensation of justice may spring from the thirst of domination over our fellow-creatures; and religion itself, even when sincere, may be instigated by that selfish regard to future reward, which has been termed other-worldliness.

A couple of gentlemen, both of whom were recently turned out of office, are running against each other in Alabama for another office. Inasmuch as they have, in political phrase, lost their heads, probably they will run *neck and neck*.

A letter from China says that the Chinese have succeeded, by the skill of their cultivators, in producing a new and delicious variety of tea. We suppose they have accomplished this by *crossing their teas.*

"I haven't taken a drop of liquor for a year," said an individual of questionable morals. "Indeed! but which of your features are we to believe—your lips or your nose?"

The American Agriculturist speaks of a species of pigs with square snouts. A learned goat can add, subtract and multiply, but these pigs can give an illustration of the *square root.*

There is more meaning and philosophy than at first sight appears in Coleridge's answer to a lady when she asked him whether he believed in ghosts. "Oh no, madam, I have seen too many to believe in them."

The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together; our virtues would be proud if our faults shamed them not, and our crimes would despair if they were not comforted by our virtues.

Charity not seldom proceeds from pride, from our desire to get rid of an uneasy sensation or from the hope of being repaid with usurious interest what we lend to the Lord.

"I will lay you a wager," said one sportsman to another, "that I will shoot more crows to day than you!" "Oh, yes, you could always beat me *crowing.*"

A writer in the Literary Messenger asks "if there is no way for a lady always to remain *young.*" Certainly there is—she can go to Utah and marry Brigham.

There is no castle upon the earth so strong that it may not be taken; but our castles in the air may bid defiance to our enemies.

The New York papers make mention of a policeman who knocked down six persons in the late Staten Island riot. He was the right sort of a six-pounder.

A man's happiness is said to hang upon a thread, and it may be added that the man himself sometimes deserves to hang upon a rope.

John Neal says that the eagle "has a contempt for all other birds." The owl, however, is more contemptuous still: he hoots at everything.

It is said that the hunger for gold generally increases with age. Accordingly we see that most of our old people always *have it in their mouths.*

"She isn't all that my fancy painted her," bitterly exclaimed a rejected lover, "and, worse than that, she isn't all that she paints herself."

It is far less important that a tradesman or anybody else should keep his carriage than that he should be able to keep his feet.

Isn't the wind getting round? said a traveler to his companion. I hope so; it has been sharp long enough.

There's no fun in going a-fishing when the fish won't bite, and the gnats and musquitoes will.

The fact that a man's word is at a discount is no indication that his note will be discounted in bank.

The next best thing to force in speaking is comely grace in keeping silence.

Many writers lay claim to correctness, who are better entitled to correction.

If you wish for *heart-ease*, never look to *marry gold.*

CURRENT ITEMS.

A Mrs. Huiginsohn, living in Broome street, in this city, left her babe, five months of age, sleeping on the bed, while she was busy working in the kitchen, and a couple of hours after, on going to see how the little sleeper was, she found it dead, with a large cat (belonging to the family) crouched by the side of its head. There was no mark of violence on the infant, and it is supposed by the mother, and those who believe in such things, that the cat had killed it by "sucking its breath."

The late excitement about the prize fight between Morrissey and the "Benicia Boy" seems to have brought out the cat-and-dog propensity of human nature to an alarming degree. Brutal fights are occurring in all sections of the country; and at one of unusual ferocity, which came off in South Brooklyn a few nights since, one man had his left eye gouged out, and another's nose was bitten off.

A lady, writing from New Orleans, says that she was recently introduced to a married couple near that city, whose combined ages amounted to only twenty-nine years, the husband being fifteen and the wife fourteen years old, and yet the baby, which was cutting its first tooth, was as sprightly and promising as any baby need be.

Some of the shrewd old brokers and "operators" in Wall street say that we shall soon be in the midst of one of the wildest bursts of speculation the country has ever seen. Millions of dollars have been lying idle for months, and the holders of the cash are becoming rabid for a rush at something—no matter what.

It is stated in a statistical report recently issued in London, that during the year 1856, over eleven thousand men and six hundred women were imprisoned for debt, in England. Among the former was one white-headed old man, eighty-four years of age, who had been in jail over sixteen years.

The London Times says that the amount of money already expended on the Atlantic cable, including the expenses of the Agamemnon, Niagara, Gorgon, and other ships of the British and American navies, amounts to over six millions of dollars.

A New Yorker, writing from the interior of Texas, says that sweet potatoes there are commonly from three to five inches in diameter, and from eight to twenty inches in length, and as good as they are big.

It is stated by a person of great experience in such matters, that lock-jaw in horses can be cured by wrapping them in blankets wrung out of water of two hundred degrees temperature.

It is said that the Baptist churches of this city have offered Spurgeon, the celebrated London preacher, ten thousand dollars and his expenses, if he will come to New York and preach three times a week for six months.

A girl weighing six hundred and forty pounds was recently on exhibition in this city, who amused herself by playing with and handling a young boa constrictor, seventeen feet in length.

A girl named Jane Wade broke into the Connecticut State Prison a short time since, and stole from the kitchen thereof six pans of mush that had been prepared for prisoners' breakfasts.

A full-grown black bear was recently killed in Sullivan county in this State. If there are any more bears of the same sort left in that county, the children should be kept out of the woods.

A couple were recently married in Hamburg, S. C., whose courtship commenced in jail, where the man was confined for drunkenness and the woman for stealing pork.

A Havana (Cuba) paper says that a lady who had long been bereft of reason, was restored to sanity by the shock of the terrible explosion which recently occurred in that city.

There are at present rumors of "gold-regions" having been found in Iowa, Kansas, Arkansas, North Carolina and Vermont, to say nothing of the Pacific countries.

INGRATITUDE.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY

"There came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand."

The simple islanders who built
'Mid driving rain and blast,
A fire to cheer the shipwreck'd train
That on their shores were cast,

Astonished, from the genial flame
Beheld a reptile start,
And fiercely on a stranger's hand
The fatal venom dart.

But more astonish'd still, beheld
The man who felt the fang
Shake lightly off the "evil beast,"
Without a mortal pang.

And there they knelt, an awe-struck band,
Upon that rocky sod,
And old Melita heard them laud
The stranger as a god.

Oh friends, who ever in your hearts
Maintain the warmth of love
Dispensing benefits on all
Who in your orbit move,

When round your sacred household hearth
Ye draw the inmates fair,
Take heed, amid that cherish'd group
Who sit, to warm them there,

Lest, quicken'd by the inspiring flame,
Even 'mid that hallow'd band,
The viper of ingratitude
Might fasten on your hand.

For ye, alas! might fail to wield
The Great Apostle's charm,
To turn the poisonous fang aside
And feel no lasting harm.

RICHARD HOFFMAN.

A TALE OF LOVE AND RETRIBUTION.

CHAPTER XCVIII.

PETER MANGLES PUZZLED.

It is no part of our creed that sorrow destroys either the physical or intellectual existence of its victims. Like the mildew on the flower, it may rob life of its freshness—palsy the energies of both heart and brain, changing the former into a living sepulchre, whose tenants are useless regrets for the past, or self-reproaches as bitter as they are vain.

Under any circumstances, the loss of his grandson would have been a terrible blow to the feelings of Mr. Bently; but, coming as it did, at the moment of success, when Richard had succeeded in unmasking the real character of Carus Kearn and proving the integrity of his father, it fell with double violence.

Still it did not kill. Death perhaps would have been mercy; it rendered the future a blank, cheerless as that sea

Whose waters bear no living thing,
Shunned even by the sea-bird's wing,
A lonely scene, a desert rude,
A barren waste, a solitude.

The letter, written by his wife, added to the bitterness of the old merchant's self-reproaches; for, whilst appealing to his affection in behalf of their only child, it amply justified the extraordinary step she had taken in giving her consent to his daughter's marriage with the father of our hero. In the solitude of his chamber he perused and re-perused it till every word became engraved with terrible distinctness upon his memory.

As it unveils much that has hitherto been doubtful to our readers, we consider the time has arrived for imparting its contents.

It ran thus:

"I am dying of a strange malady, which has baffled the skill of my physician, and in this world we shall never meet again. Rachel will have no mother near you to plead in her behalf, and even my memory may be a reproach, for having consented to what the world may consider an ill-assorted marriage. Richard, I did more than consented, *I advised it.*

"You have frequently accused me of a prejudice against your nephew Carus. Shortly after your departure for India, I obtained *proof*—I repeat the word *proof*—that he was not only ungrateful to you, his benefactor, but a bad, dishonest man. Unhappily, I dare not lay that proof before you; he bound me by an oath at the moment I detected—— oh! that I could tell you all! but my lips are sealed. On the word of the wife who loved you, who never yet deceived you, who must soon answer to that tribunal where every thought is judged, I have spoken truthfully.

"I know the pertinacity with which you adhere to a plan once formed. I know, also, of your design of uniting Rachel with her cousin Carus, and dared not risk the happiness of our only child. Forgive me, Richard; do not let your anger fall on the head of Rachel. Let the memory of her dead mother plead for her; she will soon have no other defender."

From these passages it was plain that Mrs. Bently had detected Carus, then, in the act of plundering his uncle and benefactor, and been bound by him, perhaps, as the means of preventing a yet greater crime, by oath never to denounce him. As to the means of the unfortunate lady's death, the doubts which vailed them may never, perhaps, be entirely raised.

After the perusal of such a letter the feelings of the merchant entirely changed. In reality, he had little if anything to forgive. The system of negative persecution adopted towards his son-in-law had led to misery. The long years of agony arising from the loss of our hero might have been spared his daughter.

When the stern man reflected on these things, it is not to be wondered that he fled to Meldown from the sight of Rachel's tears, for conscience told him he had been the cause.

Mr. Bently was seated in the library, listening to the account which the gamekeeper, Fletcher, had brought of the attempted murder at the Home Farm, when his faithful, confidential servant entered the room. The old man seemed greatly agitated, and yet a careful observer might have noted that an expression of hope, if not joy, mingled with his tribulation.

"What is it?" inquired his master. "I did not ring."

"I know you did not, sir," replied the domestic, "but a visitor has arrived at the hall."

"From London?"

"I believe he came from London last," was the cautious reply; "but he has lately been in India."

The merchant sighed at the word India—his dearest hopes, as he believed, were buried there.

"From my old friend Curry, no doubt," he said. "I will see the gentleman."

"Certainly, sir."

Still the man hesitated, and made no attempt to quit the library.

"Did you not hear me?" inquired his master mildly.

"I don't think the gentlemen comes from Mr. Curry," observed the man. "in fact, I am sure he does not. I have seen him here before, when——"

The speaker stopped short as if afraid to proceed. The grandfather of our hero marked his agitation, and a singular feeling crept over him.

"Proceed," he said; "I can bear anything now."

"When the two young gentlemen were staying at the hall, sir."

"Marsh!" exclaimed Mr. Bently.

"I believe that is the gentleman's name, sir."

"Admit him instantly," said his master; "perhaps he brings me some token or last request from my poor boy."

The domestic hastily withdrew, leaving the merchant a prey to the wildest surmise. Intelligence had reached him that all the party had perished in the attack upon the solitary tower, still he was far from anticipating the happiness in store for him.

When the lieutenant entered the library, he was much struck by the change which little more than a year had made in the appearance of Mr. Bently; his iron-gray hair had become perfectly white, and his features lost much of that expression of firmness, not to say sternness, which formerly characterized them.

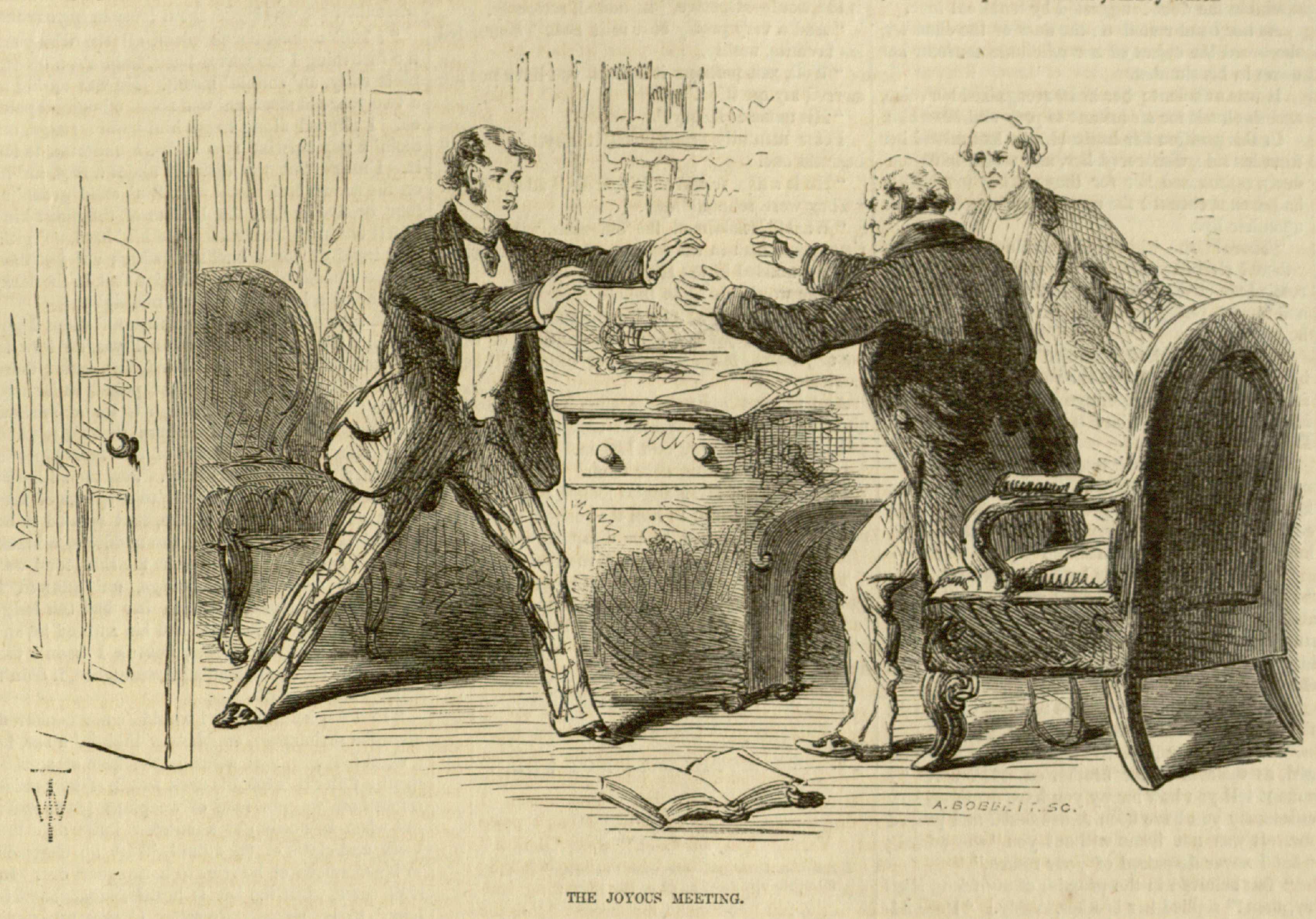
"You come to a house of mourning," observed the old man, extending his hand to him, "I might almost say of death, for life has lost its sunshine and existence—been made a blank. Who would have thought," he added, "that it was so hard a thing to die?"

Marsh seated himself in silence; for a man of the world, never had he felt so embarrassed at the sight of such hopeless misery.

"You may tell me all," resumed the speaker; "describe to me my grandson's death—I can bear it—my heart can feel no second blow. 'Tis strange," he added, with unnatural calmness, "how philosophy increases with age upon us."

"I did not witness the event you allude to," replied his visitor, deeply moved.

"I thought, that is, I understood, you accompanied him upon that fatal journey which——"


A. BOBBETT, SC.

THE JOYOUS MEETING.

Despite his boasted fortitude, the firmness of Mr. Bently gave way, and he shed bitter tears of mingled regret and affection.

"You see what a philosopher I am," he said, mournfully. "What a wayward thing the heart is," he continued, after a pause. "Who can comprehend it? For years mine remained deaf to the pleadings of nature—the sorrows of my own child—and yet the loss of my grandson has broken it."

"It was some time," observed the lieutenant, "before I could bring myself to believe in the death of my young charge, the intelligence being anything but precise upon the subject—so many rumors were flying about—one day believed, the next contradicted. To satisfy myself, I resolved to visit that part of the country where it was alleged to have taken place."

"That was kind," said the merchant, "but no more than I expected from you. You convinced yourself?"

"*Nearly so.*"

There was something in the tone in which the words were uttered, and the look that accompanied it, which startled the old man, and the first faint gleam of hope broke upon his heart.

Slowly he repeated the words "Nearly so." "Is it not then a reality? Is there a chance—a possibility that he still lives? Marsh, do not torture me by a suspense kindly meant, but more than I have strength to bear."

"The body was never found."

Mr. Bently clasped his hands, in mute but eloquent gratitude.

"Possibly, he may be a prisoner," added his visitor, who scarcely knew what to say, so greatly did the agitation of the grandfather of our hero terrify him.

"Did you not ascertain?" exclaimed Mr. Bently.

The lieutenant hesitated to reply to him.

"But that shall be my care," continued the old man; "I would have ransomed him with a kingly ransom, with my own life, if necessary. I will trust to no other agent, but proceed myself to India."

"Consider, my dear sir, the distance—your great age."

"I feel neither," interrupted the merchant. "There is a chance of again beholding him, and I am young again—strong in affection and in hope. You will accompany me? I am sure you will."

"Willingly, most willingly," replied Marsh, who felt that, at any risk, it was best to end the agitating scene, "*should the journey prove necessary.*"

"He lives!" exclaimed Mr. Bently, springing from his chair, and grasping the speaker by the arm with an energy that astonished him. "I feel it! I am sure of it! You would not trifle with my white hairs, and insult me by a mockery. Speak—one word, in pity!"

A light step was heard approaching the door of the library. The merchant heard it; it fell familiarly as a thing of old upon his ear, and he stood for an instant like a statue, motionless and spell-bound, but still retaining his grasp upon the arm of the lieutenant, without whose support he must have fallen. Expectation, hope, doubt, fear, all were wrought to the highest pitch, and further delay might have proved fatal, when the door opened, and the next instant Mr. Bently found himself in the arms of his grandson. Marsh quitted the room! he had performed his task, and a weight of anxiety was removed from his heart.

Several hours elapsed before he was summoned to rejoin them, when he found the merchant exceedingly pale from the recent agitation he had undergone; but still much stronger than he expected. The expression of hopeless sorrow had already given way to one of deep content, if not of joy.

"Richard has told me all," were the first words the old man uttered; "I shall soon have a grandchild more to love."

In these few graceful words did Mr. Bently convey his approbation of our hero's choice of Lillian. He also announced his intention of leaving Meldown the following day for London.

"Too soon!" he repeated, in answer to an observation of the lieutenant's, hinting that his strength had already been overtaxed: "not an hour, not a minute. Remember, there are other tears to dry; mine must not prove a selfish joy. I have no longer any excuse for remaining secluded from the world," he continued, with feeverish excitement; "my heart feels strong again. I long to see him in his mother's arms, then, and then only, shall I cease to regret the past."

Impatient as Richard felt for the meeting with his parents, he entreated his grandfather to postpone his intention at least for a day or two longer, fearing the old man's health might give way under so much excitement.

"Remember," he added, "we shall be in time for Christmas."

Something in the mention of Christmas-day appeared to please the merchant, and he at once assented.

It was not till Mr. Bently had been persuaded to retire to rest that Richard Hoffman and the lieutenant returned to the Home Farm to see after their friends and inquire the fate of Andrew Silex.

The steward was dead.

"I trust I shall never witness such another deathbed," observed Jack Manders, who appeared exceedingly pale. "And yet I rejoice I did so," he added, "since it may prove of service to one who is dear to you. The parchment which Mike's companion in crime carried off with him was the long-concealed codicil to the will of the former baronet of Meldown, bequeathing the estates equally between the issue of the two brothers Norman and Allan, in the event of the former dying without male heirs."

"This is most important," observed the lieutenant, "and supplies a key to the motives of Lady Boothroyd. The deed must be recovered at any sacrifice."

"As for the wealth of my late unworthy relative," added the nephew, "he has done something to atone by bequeathing it to Lillian."

"That was your suggestion, I feel convinced," exclaimed our hero, struck by his disinterestedness.

"What better could he do with it?" replied the young man. "My mind was fully made up not to accept a shilling of it. The same objection," he added, "cannot apply to Miss Boothroyd, whom he has so deeply wronged."

Forty-eight hours after the events we have described, there were two persons in London exceedingly puzzled by letters from Meldown Park. The first was the reader's old acquaintance, Peter Mangles. Never in the course of his life had the worthy clerk felt so completely at a loss to comprehend his employer. He perused the missive twice, folded it carefully, placed it in his desk, then drew it forth again to be perused a third, and even a fourth time.

"Dear me, dear me!" he muttered to himself, "what can Richard mean by writing in such an incomprehensible way. I am to order the servants to get his town house ready to receive him in two days; that's plain enough. I can understand his being tired of the country, but what can he mean by this?"

"'I intend to give a large party on Christmas-day, and have despatched the invitations from here. I must trust to you to see that arrangements are made on a scale commensurate with the importance of the affair.'

"What affair?" demanded Peter, to himself, at the same time throwing the letter upon the desk; "how can any man in his senses write in such an unbusiness-like style?"

Again he took up the offending sheet of paper, and finished reading the contents.

"'Congratulate me, my valued friend. I am no longer a lonely being. It is true, happiness comes late; but it has dawned at last.'

"What am I to congratulate him about?" exclaimed the old man, pettishly. "He was rich enough before, and no accession of wealth—even if he has come into any—can bring happiness. He must be mad! but it all comes of living in the country. Men never get such flighty ideas who live in the city."

By slow degrees a dreadful suspicion began to insinuate itself into the brain of Peter Mangles: it was neither more nor less than that his employer had got married. So strong did the conviction grow upon him, that several, certainly not very complimentary nor congratulatory, observations, in which the words "Old donkey," or ones which sounded very like them, escaped his lips.

"Married! he must be married!" he repeated, "nothing but marriage or bankruptcy can explain Richard's writing such an unbusiness-like letter. The old sin, pride, has been at work again. I knew he regretted that Mary was not a boy—as if she could help it. Married: doubtless under the ridiculous notion of having an heir to bear his name. Well, well, well, some artful creature has entangled him in her meshes—a widow, most likely a widow."

So engrossed and upset was the old clerk by this idea, that he absolutely made a wrong entry in the ledger, a thing which had only occurred once before during the many years he had kept the books. His indignation, however, did not prevent his attending to the directions of his employer.

Rachel, too, had received a letter, in which her father invited her, together with her husband and Mary, to dine with him at his residence in London on Christmas-day.

"Let me see you wear your long-forgotten smiles," added the writer, in the concluding paragraph. "I have a present both for you and my granddaughter."

"A present," sighed the mother of our hero; "gold, gifts—alas! what sorrow at one time might they not have spared me!"

CHAPTER XCIX.

CHRISTMAS.

How chilling is the aspect of December, with its gloomy skies and piercing cold, its withered leaves, rustling in time's path, like memories over a graveyard, to remind us that another year is about to pass away—a drop in the vast ocean of eternity.

Apart from the religious influences of the season, even old Christmas would be dreary but for those social feelings, ties and sympathies which encircle the domestic hearth with happy kindred faces, warm the heart by recollections of the past, or smiling anticipations—hope's sunbeams—of the future, waiting, as it were, an earlier spring, rich in affection's flowers amid the snows of winter.

Unfortunately, there are but too many of the human family to whom such consolations are denied—beings whom death has isolated, left like some blighted tree in the world's wilderness alone—sad monuments of sorrow.

Although Rachel could scarcely be classed with these utterly desolate ones, having still the love of her husband and Mary to sustain her, she was almost as much to be pitied, for the worm was at the root of life, poisoning its enjoyments with bitter regrets, the pangs of hope deferred, and the tortures of uncertainty. If her worn features sometimes wore a smile, the expression proved but momentary; the shadow quickly returned, its darkness was in her heart, where, in secret, she continued to mourn the loss of her eldest born, as a mother's heart alone can mourn.

It was Christmas-eve, and the Hoffmans were seated in their elegantly furnished drawing-room. As a matter of course, Peter Mangles was with them, where else could the old man spend his evenings? he had given up his cottage on Blackheath on purpose to be near them. George had become to him as a son, and Mary—it would be difficult to describe the love of the eccentric clerk for the fair and gentle girl, who, as a child, had awakened so deep an interest in his heart.

The impression that his employer either had contracted, or was about to contract, some absurdly provoking marriage, haunted him; he could not dismiss it from his mind; never, in the course of his long existence, had he felt so impatient for the arrival of the morrow, which was to confirm or dissipate his doubts.

Rachel and her husband merely smiled when he expressed them. Apart from the happiness of Mr. Bently, it was a matter of indifference whether they were well-grounded or not, for could wealth have brought happiness, they had more than enough already. As for Mary, she felt delighted with the idea of having a grandmamma.

Peter looked at his watch. It was past eight o'clock.

"Not yet arrived," he muttered; "most unbusiness-like habit, but there, Richard never was punctual—that is to say, of late years. Thinks to surprise us, no doubt; *but he won't surprise me,*" added the old man, with a slight—a very slight—touch of bitterness in his tone. "Well, I have carried out his instructions to the very letter; he will find nothing to reproach me with on that score—all is ready for the reception of the bride.

"Bride!" he repeated with a grimace; "that he should think of such a thing at his years! Why, he is only nineteen months and eleven days my junior. Perhaps it is catching," he added, with a desperate attempt to appear facetious; "if so, I shall be taking a wife next"

"Oh, do—pray do!" exclaimed Mary, throwing her arms playfully round his neck; "I should so like to be a bride's-maid."

"I'll think of it, my love," answered Peter, drily. Then, overcome by what struck him as a ridiculous idea at his time of life, he broke into a good-humored laugh.

"No, no," he added, parting the clustering curls from the brow of the fair girl, and imprinting a kiss upon her forehead, "I must dance at your wedding first."

The happy smile vanished from the countenance of his young favorite, and a pensive expression supplied its place. Rachel was the only one who remarked the change; few things escape a mother's eye.

A carriage was now heard to draw up at the door of the house, and Mr. Mangles began to feel nervously impatient.

"That is Richard," he said.

"It is grandfather's carriage!" cried Mary, who, on hearing the vehicle, had run to one of the windows, and partially drawn aside the curtain to peep into the street.

"With four horses, no doubt," muttered the clerk, commencing a string of commentaries, audible only to himself. "Postilion, with white favors; a giggling maid and impudent valet in the dickey, mocking the *youthful bridegroom*, pitying the bride. What will they say in the city?"

Mr. Bently now made his appearance in the drawing-room.

Although neither George Hoffman nor his wife had paid much attention to the prediction of Peter, they were both struck by the change which had taken place in the appearance and general bearing of the merchant. He had quitted them a broken-spirited man, bowed down with regrets and sorrows. His figure was now erect, and his countenance wore an expression of unclouded joy.

There was something more than usually affectionate in the feeling with which he embraced his daughter, and gazed upon her careworn features.

"You received my letter?" he said, after kissing his grandchild, and shaking hands with her father and the clerk.

"Three days since," answered Rachel, with a faint smile.

"Mine duly came to hand at the same time," observed Peter, drily. "I trust you found everything arranged to your satisfaction?"

"I have not been home yet," replied Mr. Bently. "This is my first visit."

"Good gracious!" mentally ejaculated Mangles, "he has never brought her here!"

"I am tired of the country, Rachel," said her father, "especially at this season of the year, when the heart requires something more than the silent companionship of books and solitary thoughts."

"I never find time for solitary thoughts," observed the old clerk, in a tone which somewhat startled his employer; "and as for books, how any man can complain of them, provided they are properly kept and regularly balanced, is more than I can comprehend."

His hearers smiled; they perfectly understood the books the speaker alluded to—in fact, the only ones that had ever greatly interested him.

Mr. Bently walked towards the fireplace, and leant his head upon his hand for several instants with an air of meditation; evidently there was something upon his mind which he hesitated to disclose. Peter, fully believing in the truth of his supposition, enjoyed his embarrassment exceedingly.

"Now it is coming," he thought.

"You are not very curious, Rachel," observed her father.

His daughter regarded him with a look of surprise.

"Have you forgotten the present I promised you in my letter?"

"Pretty present—a mother-in-law," mumbled the clerk. "Half Mary's fortune gone, at the very least. Well!"

"Have my gifts become valueless?" added the merchant.

"Valueless!" repeated Rachel; "oh, no. You know how fondly I prize the slightest mark of your affection; blessed with that, I have nothing more to desire."

"You must be happy—much happier than falls to the lot of most of us," observed Mr. Bently, with a sigh; "few in this world can pronounce that Heaven has not another blessing to bestow. *What, not one desire? not one?*"

"Father," exclaimed the agitated woman, her eyes instantly filling with tears, "you do not, I am sure you do not, mean these words unkindly, but they wring my heart. Could you read its sufferings, its sleepless regrets, its agonies, you would judge me differently—very differently. If my lips sometimes wear a smile, it is that I may not cloud the joy of others. For years," she added, "my life has been one of sorrow; respect and pity it."

Mary ran to the side of her mother, and, throwing her arms round her, vainly endeavored to kiss away her tears, which continued to fall fast. The seal upon the fountain had been broken.

As for Peter Mangles, he turned very red in the face, used his handkerchief several times, and regarded his employer almost ferociously.

"He has the heart of a crocodile," he mentally ejaculated.

"Mr. Bently, is this wise? is it kind?"

"Silence, George," said the merchant, interrupting his son-in-law. "We sometimes live to regret reproaches, but never our forbearance."

There was something so impressive, not in the words merely, but in the tone and dignified manner of the speaker, that his request was involuntarily complied with. Not another remonstrance or observation was uttered.

"Rachel," continued her father, in a voice which he vainly attempted to render firm, "you will not accuse me of intentional unkindness. You are a mother, and can judge the depth and sometimes *the fear* of a parent's love. It was far from my desire to inflict an unnecessary pang. Would I could have endured it for you."

The features of his daughter suddenly became white as the marble against which the speaker leant.

"God is very merciful, Rachel," he added. "The blessing we too frequently demand with passionate entreaties, sighs and tears, is wisely withheld to be accorded to our resignation."

A piercing cry—it could not be called of joy, scarcely of hope—broke from the lips of the long-bereaved mother, as the import of his words gradually dawned upon her mind.

"You have heard tidings of my boy!" she exclaimed; "I feel it—read it in your eyes, which overflow with tenderness. You are too good—too humane," she added, with increasing excitement, "to torture me with delusive hopes. He lives! say that he lives! a look—a word. I can bear it, father; a mother's heart is strong—oh, how strong! Speak, or suspense will kill me. Richard, my son, my son!"

On hearing his name thus passionately pronounced, prudence—the fear of presenting himself too suddenly—all gave way to the strong impulse of filial love, and our hero entered the drawing-room without waiting for the signal agreed upon between his grandfather and himself.

"Mother, dear mother!" were the only words his agitation permitted him to speak; but there was a spell in them that awoke the long silent echoes in that mother's heart. In an instant her arms were around his neck; her heart beating against his; her pale lips pressed to the cheek of her lost son.

Kisses, broken murmurs of gratitude, and looks that spoke unalterable affection, were all that passed between them. In that embrace how richly did Richard Hoffman feel all he had endured repaid. To the long desolate mother's heart—but what pen can describe her emotions, as she gazed upon his manly form, read in his eyes a proof more eloquent than words, how fondly her memory had been cherished?

For some time neither the father nor the sister ventured to obtrude their joy; each felt there was a right holier even than theirs—the claim of maternal love.

Rachel did not forget them.

"George," she sobbed, extending her hand to her husband, "our boy—our eldest-born restored free from shame and crime! Mary, your brother!"

The arm of Richard encircled the form of the weeping girl, whose head reclined upon his shoulder

"Thanks, Lord!" added the grateful woman, sinking upon her knees; "the children that Thou gavest have not been turned from Thee!"

"My son," exclaimed his deeply-agitated father, as he grasped his hand, "I can meet your gaze without a blush: sorrow and an angel's goodness have redeemed me from the drunkard's sin."

"I know all," replied the young man: "your struggles, triumphs. Know how proud I ought to feel to call you father!"

"Come with me to the library, George," said Mr Bently; "there is still much to be explained. Richard will undertake the task to his mother. Bring Mary with you."

Leading his daughter by the arm, George Hoffman quitted the room, accompanied by Peter Mangles, who kept blubbering like a child. The merchant followed last; as he closed the door of the drawing-room after him, he felt, for the first time for years, reconciled with himself.

"And I," said the old clerk, when his employer had concluded the narrative of his first meeting with his grandson and all that had resulted from it—"I, too, have accused you of want of feeling."

"Hush!" interrupted Mr. Bently, "no reproaches. The best I can say of my conduct is that Providence has been wiser than my resentment."

"But I will reproach myself," exclaimed Peter. "I have a right to do so; you have no idea what a ridiculous old fool I have been. Would you believe it, Richard, when I received your letter in which you spoke of being no longer alone in the world, I took it into my stupid head that you were married! As if any man in his senses," he added, "would do such an unbusiness-like thing at our time of life."

"I was greatly excited when I wrote it," observed the merchant, "for my grandson had just been restored to me; it might have been worded more cautiously."

"But that is not all," resumed Mr. Mangles, who appeared resolved to make a clean breast of it. "Just now, not an hour since, I compared you to a crocodile—to be sure it was to myself—a crocodile!" he added, with solemnity; "not that I ever saw one."

Here the speaker looked as if he considered that not very important fact only increased the atrocity of his conduct.

"I know you will forgive me," he continued, "and that is where I feel it; if I thought you would not, I should not be half so miserable."

"I have nothing to forgive, old friend," replied Mr. Bently, with a smile; "we have jogged on through life too long together, not to bear with each other's failings."

"There is some truth in that, Richard," observed Peter, with what, to those who did not know the simplicity of his character, might have appeared a sly touch of humor. "Well! we must all of us take the good with the evil, and strike a balance, I suppose."

The merchant and his son-in-law both agreed that there was more wisdom in his words than the speaker dreamt of; both felt that all things had worked together for the best.

On returning to the drawing-room, they found Rachel and her son more composed, the violence of their first emotions had subsided, and a placid, deep contentment, such as the heart feels when its best affections are gratified, supplied their place.

As for Mr. Bently, he felt both touched and gratified by the affectionate manner in which his daughter met him—there was an eloquence in her deep, thoughtful eyes far more expressive than her words, as she thanked and blessed him for the care he had taken of his grandson.

As for Peter Mangles, he could not take his eyes from our hero, but sat devouring him with his looks. To such a state of excitement had the kind old man worked himself, that several times he felt obliged to have recourse to his handkerchief to hide the emotion which oppressed him.

"You must love our kind old friend," whispered Mary to her brother; "you know not half the debt of gratitude we owe him."

"You are wrong there," replied Richard; "I have heard it all."

"From grandfather?" inquired the artless girl.

"Partly from him, and partly from another."

"Another!" repeated his sister, with surprise, "who could it be?"

The reply which, like the observation that first led to it, was given in an under tone, brought the rich blush to the cheek of Mary; and yet it consisted but of a single word, which sounded very like Harry.

Time flies swiftly when happiness forgets to count its moments; and the Christmas morn—the day when angel lips first proclaimed peace on earth and good will to man—had dawned before Mr. Bently quitted the house of his son-in-law.

"*This is your home now, Richard,*" he observed, when he bade his grandson good night. "Not a step," he added, as the youth was about to proffer to see him at least to his carriage. "My home will not appear cheerless now; the happy faces I leave behind me will people it with joyous recollections."

"To-morrow, then," said our hero, with a smile.

"We shall meet again with calmer feelings," replied the merchant. "Rachel," he added, as his daughter advanced to receive his good-night, "you will not fail me—I am sure you will not, for I have not forgotten your words—'A mother's heart is strong.' You will encounter strange faces, but kind hearts—those who have loved your son."

Perhaps there were fewer happier persons that night than Mr. Mangles. There was no fear now that the firm would become extinct. George Hoffman and his son would bring fresh energy and youth to it. Everything had turned out as he could have wished; and he foresaw the time when he and his employer might leave the direction of affairs in younger hands. They had toiled long enough.

"I hope they have attended to the boy's book-keeping," he muttered to himself. "Surely, Richard has never neglected that."

"Even if he has," he thought, "a year or two under my care, and—yes, yes—that may be made all smooth."

In fact the old clerk had rather wished that his grandfather might have neglected our hero's education on that important point, so delightful did he feel would be the task of instructing him.

It was not extraordinary that, after the violent emotions she had endured, the sleep of Rachel Hoffman proved a restless one; that more than once she started from her pillow and asked herself if the happiness she felt was real, or whether imagination had not once more cheated her by one of those intensely vivid dreams which mock the sleep of sorrow.

So painful did this uncertainty at last become that she crept stealthily from her couch and, hastily drawing a wrapper around her, proceeded to the room where Richard slept in order to confirm or dissipate the doubt suggested by maternal love.

As her hand rested on the door of the chamber, she heard the object of her solicitude murmur her name in his slumber.

It was sufficient; her heart recognized his voice, and she knelt for an instant to pray and bless him.

In this position her husband, who had missed her from his side, discovered her, and would have tenderly reproached her for thus risking her health, had she not checked the words by placing her finger upon her lips.

"There!" she whispered, pointing to the room, "there! sleeping beneath our roof, all that a parent's love could wish him; noble, truthful, brave, and honest, George, honest; have we not cause to be grateful?"

"We have, indeed," replied the father of our hero; "to our son I owe the re-establishing of my fair name; a better heritage than the fortune my industry may secure him; but this is not the hour, Rachel."

"I know it, George," interrupted his wife; "do not blame me, or deem me childish in my joy; but my happiness seems too great to be real. I doubted it. You are not angry with me?" she added, looking in his face with a smile.

"Angry!" repeated her husband, with emotion; "as readily might the wrecked mariner feel anger at the plank, which bore him through the foaming surge to land; the bewildered traveler at the star, his guide amid the pathless desert's sands, as I with thee."

Our hero and his sister were the first to meet in the breakfast-room on the following morning.

"Richard, dear Richard!" exclaimed the gentle girl, as the arm of her brother enfolded her. "I cannot tell you how happy you have made us, how constantly you have been remembered and prayed for. It was not home without you," she added; "but I never despaired of your return."

"You believed in the promise of my friend Harry, then?" replied her brother, archly. "Poor fellow! the intelligence of my death placed him in a cruel position. I had bound him by a promise."

"Which he kept, I can assure you."

"To the risk of his happiness," observed our hero.

"How can you suppose such a thing," said Mary, blushing at the same time deeply; "why I don't even know his name!"

"Is not Harry a very pretty name?"

"I suppose it is not the only one."

"Morton, the son of an honorable man, one of our grandfather's oldest friends. He was my school-fellow, companion, friend. You must love him," he added, "for my sake."

His sister looked as if the task would not be a very difficult one, especially after listening to his exculpation.

"You must tell me about Lillian," she said, anxious to change the subject. "Grandpapa named her last night, and I feel so anxious to see her. I feel certain that I shall love her dearly. She must be good as well as beautiful to have won your affection."

"Why so?" demanded Richard, with a smile.

"Because you are good and —— but I must not say that, I might make you vain," answered Mary. "I have nothing left to wish for now that you are restored to us," she continued, gazing fondly in his face. "I feel so proud of you. I used to envy my young companions who had brothers to love, to confide in, to look up to, to protect them, and felt so desolate. But that is past," she added, smiling through the tears the recollection caused her. "I shall never envy any one again."

"I have a vast debt of love to pay you," observed her brother, deeply moved by her artless words.

From that hour there were no secrets between them; each poured into the other's heart the confidence which becomes doubly sweet by being shared.

It was a gratifying sight to Rachel and her husband on entering the breakfast-room, to find their children thus united.

During the morning Jack Manders made his appearance at the house, and was kindly, one might say affectionately, received by the parents of his benefactor and friend, who had informed them of his conduct to Lillian, his grateful fidelity to himself, and the noble constancy with which he had persevered in the path of integrity and truth.

At first the poor fellow felt embarrassed; he had not seen Mrs. Hoffman since the night he so generously defended her from the brutal violence of Carus Kearn upon the bridge. He recollected her only as one poor and humble as himself, and would never have recognized her surrounded by the elegancies and comforts that wealth bestows.

But Rachel had not forgotten him; pride had no place in her grateful heart, and she thanked him warmly for the past.

"This is some debt I am not aware of," observed her son. "Ah, Jack, you have secrets I find from me."

"Pray do not allude to it, sir," replied the young man, more abashed at being praised than ever he had been by reproaches.

"Sir!" repeated our hero; "I call you Jack."

"Mr. Richard—Richard, then," said his too humble friend, deeply gratified. "I knew that you were happy—happy, as you deserve to be; but I wanted to witness it with my own eyes, and as the lieutenant, Lady Bell, and Miss Lillian told me I might venture, I thought——"

"You would renew your acquaintance with old friends," observed Mary, advancing to him, and adding considerably to his embarrassment by placing both her hands in his. "What! have you forgotten me?"

"Little—that is—I mean Miss Hoffman."

"Call me Mary," said the fair girl, with unaffected simplicity; "I like that name the best."

One hour—just one short hour—before the visit to his grandfather, Richard contrived to pass at Mivart's with Lillian; there appeared something wanting to complete his happiness till she shared it with him.

For once, the heart's anticipations were more than realized, and Christmas did, indeed, prove a happy day to the party assembled at the hospitable mansion of Mr. Bently. Sir Charles and Lady Bell met the parents of Richard more like relatives from whom they had long been separated, than strangers; and, after warmly congratulating them, presented their adopted child.

"I must claim a mother's share in your love," said Rachel, as she folded the blushing Lillian in her arms.

"You make me very happy," murmured our heroine.

Mary stole to her side and kissed her, by way of introducing herself to one whom henceforth she was to regard as a sister.

At table, Richard and his friend Harry Morton placed themselves by the side of the fair girls. Every one present seemed to understand the arrangement except Peter Mangles, whom it puzzled exceedingly. He could not comprehend why he had been deprived of his accustomed seat by Mary; and, during the evening, he took an opportunity of drawing her aside to satisfy his curiosity.

"Who is that young man," he inquired, "who appears so very attentive to you? I believe that is the word—attentive," he added, seriously.

"And a very pretty one, is it not?" demanded his favorite, archly.

"Well, yes, perhaps it is, but you have not answered my question."

"His name is Henry."

Peter mentally pronounced it anything but a business one.

"He is a dear friend of Richard's," added Mary. "They were schoolfellows.

"What!" exclaimed the old man, "the mysterious gentleman in the square—the portrait—eh?"

Mary nodded in the affirmative.

"One word. Is he in the city?"

"Of course not, Peter," answered the young lady, with a playful smile; "we are none of us in the city now. Mr. Morton is, or rather will be, a barrister."

And without giving him time to ask another question, the happy creature escaped from him, and joined her brother and Lillian.

Harry was standing near them.

For an instant Mr. Mangles looked very serious; something whispered to him that one of his anticipations were doomed to be disappointed. Mary would not become the wife of a man of business.

The feeling of regret was but a momentary one, and quickly disappeared as he gazed upon her features radiant with happiness. As her glance met his, the old man gently shook his head, and sent her back smile for smile.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

MY MOTHER IS NOT OLD.

BY AUGUSTA HERBERT.

My mother is not old—she went to Heaven
In all the ripened beauty of her years;
No silver threads amid *her* brown hair shone;
Time had not ploughed her cheek by care or tears
And yet my mother's eyes were often dimmed
By tears whose falling God alone beheld;
And life's hard portion she, like others, bore;
And oftentimes with sighs her bosom swelled.

Hers was the lot of earth; as good, as bad,
As in the middle walks of life is found;
But her elastic mind, her loving heart,
Sprang up from sorrow with a quick rebound,
And on her fair young features not a mark
Of age and all its chilling reign was set;
She scarce had touched the boundary of youth—
And strong and young is my dear mother yet

Forever strong, in her immortal prime,
She cannot stoop, nor fade, nor wrinkle now;
Cœlestial beauty, like a crown, is set
On her beloved, well-remembered brow.
Her voice of music will not lose its power;
We shall not see *her* sweet eyes slowly fade;
We shall not watch her failing steps go down
To the dark shades by yew and cypress made.

My mother is not old, how bright and fair
Her loved idea shines upon my heart!
All peace—in glory—ransomed in her prime!
Thank God! thank God! though it was *hard* to part.

TURKEY SLATHERS' STORY.

We were sitting around the fire, at night, at Bryan's, listening to the tough yarns of people from the country, who had come to town that day to attend court, and sample Bailey's liquor, when I noticed that my friend, Torquil Slathers, or Turkey, as we called him, by way of abbreviation, did not seem pleased with the narratives. Turkey, although a good fellow among the boys, perfectly able to drink a quart of Cincinnati whiskey at one draught, and totally unconquerable at "old sledge," is by nature and education the foremost spinner of tough yarns in the country, and his friends seriously proposed to run him as Lie-Master General of the district against Corn-juice Pete, but there, as his brother said, "they were too ambitious." Turkey, however, always gives day and date, and furnishes you with the minutest details; and if his stories are not entirely true, they deserve to be. He looked upon the attempts at tales that were made around him as the bungling efforts of incompetent persons to trench on his prerogative, and seemed annoyed that there was no chance for a display of his abilities. At length, after an excessively dubious yarn about a bear-fight on Sandy, Turkey could hold on no longer, but broke out into a perfect freshet of narration.

"See yer, boys," said he, "you nuvver fit a bar in a pen, 'thout dog or gun, or you'd know somethin'. I tell you that's the thing to try a man, if ther uvver was. 'Taint no tacky mar race. I don't purtend to hev more manhood than folks around, an' I won't give up to hevvin' less. I reckin, physically an' sperretually, I'm built on the ginnul patron of my neighbors, whootch it is mos'ly allowed the boys of Logan kin hoe ther way even with enny man, so fur as whiskey, weemen an' war is consairned, 'specially the corn-juice an' fightin'. But I tell you I was badly scairt for wunce in my life; an' furthermore, likewise an' as well, I nuvver think of the affar, thet I don't feel as et ther wur an even bushil of copper-heads runnin' quarter-races down my backbone.

"I was huntin' over on the Spruce Fork of Coal last Jinniwery, an' meetin' nothin' wuth killin', I tuck up the branch at Chambers's, an' struck over onto Dingess's Run I met John Dingess's black boy comin' down, an' he allowed ther wur smart sign of deer on Hewitt waters, about the heads of the hollers; so I ups the drain thar, an' that brung me, ez you all know, to the top of the ridge fernent this. You see I perjected to circle round onto Hewitt, me knowin' ef I kep' the top of the ridge, I was obleeged to hev all the way a cl'ar view of the spots whar the deer are like to use. Thar wur about four inches of snow on the groun' thet hed bin shed that mo'nin; but it hed cl'ar'd off sense, an' the frost was tolluble keen, an' hed kivered the yeth's white great-coat, so that it scrunched considerable under foot. I couldn't an' I wouldn't miss deer-sign no how, an' I was sot on kerryin' in a fat buck, ef I hed to hunt the animil by moonlight.

"I crost the head of the Town Branch Hollow, an' clumb to the pint-ridge. I happent to cast my eye down to a spot whar the snow hed drifted pooty much offen the leaves, an' thar I diskivered the track of a moccasin, as I thought at fust, but on closter inspexion, I seed it was the foot of a bar I was immediently cl'ar on two p'ints—fust, that it was a four-ye'r-ole he, an' seckunt, that he hed past afore the snow fell—perhaps about sun-up. Now, I don't like to annex myself to a winter traveler, not frekwently, ennyhow. He aint the nicest customer for a man with narry dog to meet, bein' savage an' hungry, as uvrybody knows, an' chock full of fight, an', like as not, so lean that he uses up a whole acre of middlin's to fry him. But I was cur'us to know what this chap was doin' abroad, instid of takin' up winter quarters in a holler tree, as uvry bar that aint brung up in ignunce does. I 'spected he was out killin' his own pork, an' I allowed I'd be the jedge an' jury in his case, shore. So I follered the sign, wharuvver the snow didn't kiver it, for two solid hours, or tharabouts, an' bimeby I come to the head of a drain whar the rock was layin' about loose in big chunks.

"I kep' a look-out for deer, all the while, an' the fust thing I see was a buck, holdin' up his ten pints sassy, an' sunnin' hisself. He was as big as a two-year-old steer, an' was about a hundred poles off. I slipped along to git him within range, an' seein' a gap betwixt two rocks, I undertuk to lep it. I misreckint the distance about a foot, an' lit on the snow; but instid of hittin' solid groun' at four or five inches, the bottom of the plaist kine of fell out, my gun struck somethin' hard, an' githered itself off for a bust somewhar; an' jest then I heern somethin' drap about nine feet, in the darkest kine of a hole this side of midnight.

"It kine of stunted me, at fust, an' when I got over it I tried to diskiver whar I was, an' how to git out. The plaist was thunderin' dark; there was a leetle speck of light that poked in its nose by the road I come—jest enough to let me see how raly dark it was; but I soon foun' that I'd pitched inter one of them bar-traps of the fool kine—a log-pen, about eight feet squar'. Jest then I heern a growl, an' I lookt, an' see two specks of fire, about as big as a nine-pence, that seemed to be burnin' 'thout givin' light in the middle of a black heap. I felt crawly jest under the skin, for I was ekwainted with the langwidge, an' knowed I was'nt among connexions. A bar had tuk lodgin' thar the night afore, an' had bin snowed in, an' thar we wur, feller-lodgers, but as I hedn't the pleasure of the gentleman's ackwaintance, it didn't foller we wur frien's.

"Ef I'd a hed my rifle I wouldn't hev hankered after the skrimmage, ennyhow. Fightin' a bar, in a eight-foot pen, aint adzactly the kine of amusement a feller'll break his neck to git, ef he kerries a four-hoss waggin load of weepings (weapons), but when he's only got a butcher knife agin the teeth and claws of the animil, 'taint no desgrace to his manhood ef he tries to back squar' out. In sitch cases, when the bar is hostile, ingagement is boun' to be sivere. Preacher Graves says uvry man oughter rassil with the sperret; but I'm shot ef he oughter rassil with the bar, unless he kin git a tremenjous under holt. But thar was no jukin' to be done that hitch. Thar I was, jammed in an augur-hole, an' then screwed in. Ef I 'tempted to climb, there warn't no security but what the onmannerly brute might ettack me in the r'ar, an' perlitely persuade me to partake of his hosspitality. Ef I stood still I might possibly stay thar twell next spring, unless ole Hairy-coat axt me to pervide him with a dinner. I made up my mine without argyin' the main pints of the case, that I war in bad company, an' hed better git out; but whenuver I put my foot inter any kriviss at the side for that purpose, the bar he'd growl so, that I re-considert the matter, an' kep' up a respeckful standin' still. I 'speck the bar war as much scairt as Turkey; but ennyhow, I was boun' over to keep the peace, so I jest loosened my knife, an' stood thar to wait the chances.

"By the time I was let inter the merits of the case, I got a leetle used to the darkness, and manidged to discairn things cl'arer. I saw the bar was scrooched on his r'ar eend in one corner, and seemed in no hurry to move; for he knowed he had it all sot, an' had a dead sure thing. I carfully examintd the spot, an' hevin' made myself master of its construction, I diskivered that escape was onpossible, onless I was holp from outside. You see, the pen, though it hedn't bin used for a coon's age, hed bin built outen heavy oak logs, an' the kiver had bin dropt down cloast onto it, whootch the kiver, hevin' bin made a long time, an' partly outen cowcumber, them parts hed got rotten. Ther wurn't but three pieces of that fool wood in it, an' two of them had proverbly given way onder the bar, who was of a pooty good heft, an' the yuther onder me. Ther was a large enough hole to creep outen, but it was about plum center of the kiver, an' too high to retch. Ef the bar could hev bin coaxed to lie down in the middle of the plaist, I might hev raised myself outen the pit, but the animil wurn't capable of no sitch perliteness. My only chance was to set up a screetchin' like all wrath, for some one to help me out; but as I was about a half mile from a house, an' in a tolluble deep hole, thar wur slim prospex of the noise travelin' the rekwired distance. Still, pore as it was, it bein' the last kerd in the deck to drawr, an' me narry par, I lifted up my voice in the wilderness in a way to make a steamboat whissil feel itself of no account. It seemed to 'stonish the bar powerful, for he tried a han' at the same game. The more I howled the more he growled, an' as Jedge Bailey sez, *vicy varsy*, ontwell my voice grew hoarse, an' at last I couldn't even whoosper, but only jes' go through the motions.

"By this time the sun, as I jedged, hed gone down, an' I foun' myself cast out inter outer darkness, an' so hungry, I could hev taken a bait offen fried ax-hannles. It was cole, I dessay, in the ar outside, but two of us a breathin' in sitch a leetle plaist, made it tolluble warm thar. Still, ther war a creepin' chill goin' over me wunst in a while, whootch I dedn't adzacly fancy. The bar, he seemed to take it easy, an' had done gone to sleep, long afore. I concluded to foller suit, ef possible. But I fust tuck out my knife, an mennedged to fix the hannle in my han', with my hankitcher, tyin the knot partly with my lef' han' an' partly with my teeth. Then I sot myself in a corner, an' tried to trevil to the lan' of nod.

"It wurn't of no manner of use. Sleepin' wurn't to be ded—it wurn't in the kerds. The weather kep growin' colder, an' the fix I was in kep crowdin' on me, so thet I couldn't shet my eyes. I jest went back in my memory to the airliest possible day of my life, an' hed some of the quarest fool thoughts outen jail. I remembered uvry sin I'd uver done—how I'd come it over ole Bilton in a hoss trade; how I'd played kerds up-stairs in the loft, while Rasslin Billy was a preachin' below; how I'd got that Richmunt feller to ford at the deep hole, an' like to drownded the pore, missuble fool, with bar on his chin, hengin' down like a billy-goat—an' heeps. The way I groaned ovur my mennyfold enekwities would hev tickled a cirkit-rider mose to death. Uvry now an' then, I'd look over to the corner fernent me, tryin to see the bar through the dark, an' wonderin' whuther he liked the looks of things. An' I was mose desput hungry. I'd a given four aces, an' it a double pot, for a slice offen the bar's ham; an' the way I hankered after a piece of meat an' a pone of bread, was a plum sight.

"I tell you that was the longes' night sense the wurruld fust begun to dissolve on its axles, 'cordin to the fool notions of the feelosifers. It dedn't seem to be an hour lessen ten year; an' I could feel the wrinkles getherin' about my eyes, an' the gray hars a sproutin' on my head, powerful plain.

"Daylight come along at last. I could see no prospex of relief, but I begun a set of yelps, that tuck down ennythin in that line, sense the heathing got busted up at the Tower of Babel. I think them howls were a riglar structer (structure), biggern the court-house. I laid the foundation outen the Indian yell I heern among the Soo, (Sioux), when I was out west two year an' a half afore; but I tell you I put on the upper story an' the roof, in some of the pootiest licks an' mose scientific tetches in the way of scritchin to be heerd on this side of Jordan. Them show-fellers, with the minadjrees, couldn't tetch bottom 'longside of me, wit a faughty-foot pole. The bar, he tried his han' agin, but he guv in dreckly, feelin' ashamed of hisself, for he knowd he wasn't equal to the ocasion. Bime-by, I thought I heern a voice comin' through the hole above—weakly, sorter like a sheep that's bin eatin' ivy. I lissent, an' I made out my name. Folks hed missed me, an' was out sarchin'. But it had snowed some durin' the night, an' 'spose it had kivered my sign. Thunder, sez I. I shouted agin'. The noise come nearer, an' I thought they heerd me, when it got fainter an' fainter, an' I knowd they was offen the track.

"Then I kin tell you, I *did* let off the howlin'. I jest beat myself, an' then I laid down an' cried. I'm dad-fetcht ef I didn't. I poured out the tears, like a pore, missuble sinner as I was, ontwell they run in a steady stream, an' kivered the place two inches deep. I reckin the dampness disturbed the bar, for he riz an' moved to'ards me. I made my knife ready, intendin', ef he wunst gethered me, to fight as long as I could. I didn't fear his teeth a mite; but I knowd them claws of his was akshilly dangerous.

"Jest then I heern Ove Toney's voice above.

"'It 'pears to me,' sez he, 'Turkey can't be fur off, ef I'm a jedge of souns. He's fell from a rock an' broke his leg, I reckin.'

"'By Jove!' sez Clint., 'thar'—(You recollex it, Clint., don't you?)—'By Jove,' sez Clint., 'yer's his rifle.'

"I raised my voice this time—good. Nobody answered—they were all lissnin'—an' I let 'em hev it agin. D'reckly Clint. puts his head down to the hole, an' sez he:

"'Ho! Turkey!'

"I heern a singing-girl wunst to Sensennatty, an' she had a voice as sweet as the jingle of a dollar on a rock, but there was more music in Clint.'s voice jes then, then uvver *she* let out—ef not, you kin take my eyeballs to play marvels with. I norated my fix, in a hurry, an' the boys begun rakin' off the snow in order to pull the pen down. I paid no attention to the bar—in fact, I forgot him; but his feelin's were hurt by the neglec', an' he begun makin' hisself known. The fust thing I knowd, I felt his teeth aworkin' in my left shoulder. It sorter riz me—the broostles on my back begun to raise ontwell you could hev hid a bushel of corn onder my shirt, an' the mad broke out all over me like the measles. I yelled out, for the pain was perfec', an' I struck a powerful angry blow at him with the butcher-knife. It wasn't jedgematically done, an' didn't hit a vital part. It jes riz his wrath, an' made him give me goss. So he drawd down his paw, an' soaked his claws into my meat, in a way to draw about two solid feet of flesh offen my arm. I howled agin, an' tole the fellers how I was helt powerful oneasy. The next wipe he fetched me I knowd nothin' more from that time out.

"Ove an' the rest wur scairt bad at my yelpin', an' me not speakin' afterwards, an' tore away the logs in a hurry. But it was too late. All they foun' in the pen was the bar, who was pickin' his teeth with his claw, a par of hogskin moccasins, a broken butcher-knife, an' about a bushel an' a half of my bones. Boys, let's liqour!"

BE KIND TO EACH OTHER.

BY AUGUSTA MOORE.

People are generally kind enough when they feel like being so. It is *easy* being kind when impulse is all that way, or when one has something to gain by it; but to be kind from principle—*always* kind, kind to *all*—to those not particularly agreeable as well as to those one loves—*that* is quite another matter And yet that is the only kindness which is of any real value—the only kindness on which one can depend.

Many persons delude themselves into a pleasant belief that they are kind-hearted because they are conscious of being, in certain cases, quickly touched with sympathy, and because, while their fit is on, they say and do a great many very kind and amiable things; but when the novelty of that peculiar distress has worn off, and it lies, an accustomed thing, before them—when it has ceased to cause their hearts to throb, or their eyes to swim, though *not* to cause to its victims all the woe that at first so moved them, do they steadily continue the needed sympathy and aid which at first they so eagerly offered? If they *do*, then are they, indeed, kind, for true kindness is not so much in the sudden flaming up of sympathy, and the impulsive opening of the hand to aid, as it is in the steadfastness of feeling which never glows so hotly as to burn itself out before the cause which fanned it into life is removed. Impulse is good to *start* kindness; but it is only principle that can keep it successfully and constantly in action. Impulse will almost destroy you with the heat of its impassioned embraces and kisses at one moment, and the next it will fling you out to perish in frozen outer darkness, forgetting that you ever lived. But principle, whether it ever declare itself passionately or not, will never disappoint—will never leave you nor forsake you. It is, perhaps, to be regretted that there are rigid and stern beings who deny to the warm and kindly hearts that beat beneath their rock-bound and stern exterior any impulsive action; but on the kindness of men like these one may rely, *almost* as on that of God. Well would it be for the world *were* all as faithful and as truly kind as they.

Men of iron features and of changeless hearts—incomparably are they to be honored above those who sway to every breath of feeling, and weep one moment over the sorrows at which they will laugh or *sneer* the next; and yet how beautiful humanity would be if the granite of truth and principle, and the sweetness, freshness, and attraction of impulse, went together as they ought. Beauty and truth should ever go hand in hand. The semblance and the reality should be together—that which is sweet and winning should never be as a bubble, to break and vanish; or as a false light, to go out in your path when you need it most. Kindness should be constant, or it is *not* kind.

NATIONS in a state of war are like individuals in a state of intoxication, they frequently contract debts when drunk, which they are obliged to pay when sober.

LEGENDS OF THE CRIMEA.

THE CHARGE AT BALAK-LAVA.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

Like a thousand rushing whirlwinds
Cradled on the heart of storms,
Roll'd that awful sea of madness ;
Troops of wild, impetuous horses !
Troops of grim, impetuous riders !
Charging down on Balak-Lava—
Thundering down on Balak-Lava !

What to them were fields of glory ?
Seeing only death-wounds gory
Washed out white in woman's tears—
So went out the hopes of years—
One wild, simultaneous impulse,
Half of hatred, half of woe,
Wrung from anguish not their own,
But the ocean-tide of sorrow
That must homeward set to-morrow,
When the mad fight would be done !
As the tresses lie the darker
For the whiteness of the shroud—
As the lightnings gather splendor
From the blackness of the cloud—
So the coming and the going
Of that momentous pain
Wrung out by that heartless tone,
By that rash, unfeeling blunder,
Drowned almost in cannon-thunder—
"Take the Guns !" Left each cheek burning
With a terrible disdain—
"Take the Guns !" A hot defiance
Seething through each heart and brain,
Dyed the garments of their fury
With a tenfold scarlet stain !
"Take the Guns !" Each warrior, emulous,
Tighter grasped his trusty blade ;
Like an ocean-roll of tempest
Girt with terror, down they whirled !
Flashing lightning back on lightning,
Roaring thunder back on thunder
Through the Russian ranks dismayed !
Each strained eyeball glaring under
Lowering brow blazed fiercely bright,
And each fiery heart waxed stronger,
And each aspiration longer,
Higher, wider, nobler, clearer,
Trampling louder, nearer, nearer,
Seeing only palms of glory
Waving in heroic story !
Not the death-wounds gaping, gory,
Washed out white in woman's tears—
In the mighty sea of anguish
Of the coming, widowed years.
Right into the storm of battle !
Right into the heart of carnage !
Right into the whirl of slaughter,
Down they thundered,
Full six hundred,
Charging glorious Balak-Lava ! !

Oh ! the orphans !—Oh ! the widows !—
Oh ! the awful, blood-red shadows,
Sweeping over English thresholds,
When that fearful fight was done—
When some one had, witless, blundered,
When the world had cheered, and wondered
When the noble, wrecked Six Hundred,
Lay, with feet toward the foeman,
Staring blindly in the sun ! !

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THE ARMAGH MARAUDERS;

OR,

THE BESIEGED COT.

FROM THE NOTES OF A TRAVELER

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

At Dublin I met my old friend from London, Thomas Elwell. He was on his way to Londonderry, and was very anxious that I should accompany him. He was agent for one of the metropolitan companies who owned most of the land in that county, and was going up on business ; and as soon as this business was done he meant to spend a few weeks in hunting and fishing. I had a great desire to visit the north of Ireland, and as this proposition suited me, I accepted it. But I could not go directly on with Elwell and his party, as I was obliged to wait at Dublin for important letters ; so it was arranged that I should meet them at Ballyronan, on the western shore of Lough Neagh, sometime within two weeks.

But my letters did not come as I had expected. I had to wait eight days for them, and then I had to go to Wexford to attend to a trust given me by one of my correspondents ; so that it was over two weeks before I was prepared to set out. However, I got started at length. I took a packet for Belfast, and from thence I found conveyance by stage. When I reached Ballyronan I found a letter there for me from Elwell, in which I was informed that they had waited for me as long as they could, and that I should find them ten miles south of there, near the shore of the lake ; and I was further informed that one of the boatmen would take me directly to their abode. I found the boatman to whom I had been recommended, and we had a pleasant run down the lake. I found my friends occupying a small cottage, upon a wild, romantic spot, about half a mile from the water's edge, from whence could be obtained a fine view of Lough Neagh. The boatman was in a hurry, so he simply pointed out to me the place, and then started on his return. I should have insisted upon his stopping, but I saw Elwell himself upon a rocky eminence not far off, and being thus assured that all was safe, I let the fellow go. My friend had seen me land, and he came down to meet me, and conducted me to his quarters, where I found Matthew and Theodore Croft, two brothers who had come up from London partly to help their friend arrange his business, and partly for sport. They had had excellent luck at shooting, and they had also taken some of the finest salmon I had ever seen. A splendid dinner was soon served, and when that was disposed of we took our guns and went out.

Just at sundown we returned to the cot, and as our cook, an honest Wexford man, by the name of Pat Collins, was preparing supper, the boatman, who had brought me down the lake, made his appearance, and took Elwell aside. I saw there was something important on the docket, but I was busy with my gun, and I paid little attention to it. When Elwell came back, however, I judged that the matter was serious, for he looked troubled and uneasy.

"There's likely to be trouble in the camp," he said.

I asked him what had happened.

"I have had intimations of this before," he resumed, taking a seat by my side, while Pat drew near to hear. "I have received partial warnings, but they were not of such a character that I thought it worth while to take notice of them. Now, however, the aspect of affairs is changed, and I fear we shall have trouble. I am sorry you come, for your visit——"

I stopped him, and bade him allow me to look out for myself after he had enlightened me upon the nature of the danger.

"Well," he continued, "it is just here : You know, of course, that nearly all the land hereabouts is owned by our company in London, and though we do as fairly as it is possible for men to do, yet there must be fault found. In Armagh, just to the south of us, there is a gang of marauders, collected from the wild, half savage peasantry of that district, and they have been plundering and burning, and killing too, wherever they could find opportunity. Their crops have been cut off by blight, and I suppose they have suffered. The land in their region is owned, mostly, by parties in Leinster, and I have no doubt that the agents have been hard upon them. At all events, they have killed all the Irish agents in their part of the country, and it was this fact that was reported to me as a warning ; but I have had nothing to do with the Armagh men—we have no interest in their lands—and I did not believe they would come this way. But I fear I was mistaken. They have sworn that they will kill every rascally agent they can find, and Dennis Connolly, the boatman who has just been here, says they mean to take us with the rest. He has heard from them at Milltown, and he assures me they will be here this very night. If such is their purpose it is too late for me to flee, for I can only go by the lake, and they might overhaul us there. Yet you can go if you wish."

I simply smiled at my friend's kind permission, and assured him that if he remained to defend the cot, I should remain with him.

"I have considerable property here which I cannot handily move," Elwell said ; "and though I should not suffer much in its loss, yet I do not mean that those fellows shall have it. I shall stick to my post, and if you wish to stay with me, so much the better. We may be able to give them a warm reception."

In a few minutes Matthew Croft came in, and he had heard the news from one of the fishermen. He said the Armagh ruffians were even now upon the lake, and bound for our place. Then a firm resistance was the only choice left for us, and we made all necessary preparations as speedily as possible. I had heard enough of those wild peasants to know that they were but mere brutes when their passions were aroused, and that they would hold human life cheaply enough ; but I had no desire to escape the conflict now. I might have remained away had I suspected such a state of affairs, but here I was, and I determined to make the best of it. We hurried on with our supper, and as soon as that was disposed of a council of war was holden. We were consulting together when a boy arrived from the shore to inform us that the marauders had disembarked. This boy was the son of the fisherman whom Matthew had seen, and he did not dare to be known as our friend. Elwell went out with the lad, and when he returned he was fired with excitement.

"Archy McGrath leads the villains," he said, "and Hugh Broughshay and Courtney O'Dowd are with him—three of the most unmitigated villains that ever went unhung. They are huge, powerful fellows ; full of brute courage ; and they have unlimited sway over their companions. They talk of redressing wrongs, but they mean plunder. But we'll be ready for them."

The cot was built of stone, with small square windows, and a door of thick, solid oak plank. It had not been originally intended for a garrison, but had been made thus strong in order that it might be a safe repository for the property of the company and its agents when necessary. The structure stood against the face of a perpendicular rock, which thus formed the rear wall, so of course there could be no door or windows in that direction ; but upon the back slope of the roof there was a scuttle, reached by a small ladder from the floor, which afforded a passage to the top of the rock

"We have powder and ball enough for an army," remarked Matthew, as I asked concerning the state of their means.

"Enough !" cried Elwell. "Why—there are four kegs of powder in the cellar which I brought up for blasting purposes three years ago,—that is—they are there if they've not been stolen."

"They're there, sir," said Pat. "I've seen 'em every time I've bin down wid the birds."

"Then never fear for ammunition," returned the agent. "So now let's load up and be ready for them."

He had hardly spoken when we heard a shout from the direction of the lake—a maddened, defiant howl. The villains knew that we had no means of escape with any weighty articles, save by the very path up which they were coming, so they cared not to keep their approach a secret. There was no moon, but most of the stars were visible, though a few fleecy clouds hung over the tops of the Antrim mountains. Still the stars afforded but little light, and the evening was already settling into a dark night—dark in that place—dark from the deep shadows of the giant cliffs and overhanging trees. The howls came nearer and nearer, until finally we could see the dark forms of the Armagh savages coming upon the broad plateau in front of the cot. I counted fifteen of them clearly—there were more—a few more—but they came crowding up over the brow of the sharp pitch so thickly that I lost my reckoning after that. They gathered in front of our little fort, and then one of their number—a huge, powerful fellow, as I could plainly see—advanced a few paces and called out to us—

"Where's the agent ?" he shouted. "Let him come out, or ye'll all die wid him ! His blood must leave his black heart this night. We're the boys from Armagh, an' we know how to dispose of every sneakin', murtherin' agent in the country. Come out wid ye, or down comes yer walls, an' death to the whole of ye !"

There was a slight question to be decided before we made any reply to this. Should we commence resistance at once, or open a parly with them ? We had seven rifles, and four good double-barreled shot-guns, beside four pairs of pistols ; and these were all loaded. Our two windows were so high that they could not be reached from the outside, while we, by standing in a chair, could get a good aim from them.

"Blood an' 'ounds !" cried Pat, in disgust, "d'ye think ov tratin' wid 'em ? D'ye think ye can make them Armagh wolves understand reason ? Ye'll see if ye only ax 'em !"

At this juncture the leader of the marauders called out again for the agent.

"An' isn't it Archy McGrath that calls to ye?" said Pat. "Don't ye know him ? I tell ye, he'd murther his own mother quicker 'n he'd let one ov us go if he got his hands on us !"

Elwell was at one of the windows, and he waited no longer. He rested the muzzle of his rifle upon the stool, and fired. A howl, like the death cry of a devil, followed the sharp report, and in a moment more it was answered by a full chorus from the marauders.

"Another rifle !" cried Elwell, passing down the empty weapon. "They'll murder us all if they get hold of us now. McGrath has fallen, but Broughshay and O'Dowd are there. Take the other window, somebody !"

Matthew Croft was already at that post, and he fired a moment afterwards. Theodore, Pat, and myself sprang to loading the pieces as they were discharged, which we could do very well in the dark, as we had exact charges, and everything at hand. With deafening howls the villains discharged a volley against the cot, and some of the balls came through the windows, but without damage, as Elwell and Croft kept their stand a little upon one side. After this the enemy made a rush for the door, but they found it too strong for them, and they retired to the end of the cot, we getting two shots at them as they went.

In a few minutes a bright light flashed out upon the darkness, and we found that they had ignited some torches which they had brought. I leaped into the chair by Matthew's side, and saw the murderous rascals just coming around beneath the windows. The beams of the torches flashed in their faces, and I must say that I never before saw such a diabolical looking set. I had heard of wild men and these were perfect specimens. Murder was stamped upon their every feature, and they looked like the villains they in truth were. Elwell and Croft fired again, with a sure aim, and then dodged back to avoid the shots that were sent in return. Pretty soon the whole crowd sought a place of shelter again, and we could overhear them reasoning together. Courtney O'Dowd seemed to have taken McGrath's place, and he had succeeded in gaining their attention. They were convinced that they could do nothing until they had got the door down, and O'Dowd was planning for that. Several of them were armed with axes, and some of these went off to cut down a large tree which grew close at hand, and from the trunk of which they soon formed a battering-ram heavy enough to take our door down in an alarming short space of time.

"This is coming rather tough," said Elwell. "If we take a position so as to fire they can see us, as they have men placed at four different angles for that purpose. The door must come down at all events. We may shoot one or two more, but we shall gain nothing. They can place a few men who can effectually cover the advance of the batteries. And see ! There comes the gang now. Mercy ! they've got a log heavy enough to batter down a door of triple iron ! Can we escape by the roof ?"

"Only to have them follow us," returned Matthew, "for we should have to come around upon the plateau in order to get away. There is no possible path over the cliff."

I began to fear for the result. While we had been able to keep up our fire there had been an excitement which banished fear ; but now that we could only look on and see the blood-thirsty scamps planning our destruction the case became different. The light of the torches glared so fiercely into the cot that we could not have got an aim from one of the windows without being instantly marked, and we were forced to observe their movements from points where we could not be observed in return. They howled in their madness as they toiled up with the ponderous beam, and swore that they would have our hearts' blood before they left us.

"You are sure there is no way of escape by the roof," said I.

"How can there be ?" replied Elwell. "The scuttle only opens upon the rock."

"But we may go, and pull the ladder up after us," I suggested.

"And then the villains would come around and shoot us down from the cliff."

"And there is no escape from the cliff ?"

"Only by passing back in front of the cot."

"Be jabers !" cried Pat, with a clasp of his hands, "an' why can't we blow 'em up ?"

"Blow 'em up ?" repeated Elwell.

"Wid the powther in the cellar," suggested the cook. "Put a slow match to it, an' thin let 'em come in !"

"By the big gun !" exclaimed the agent, leaping down from his post of observation, "that is our only hope. Pat, you shall be rewarded for this ! It may save us. Light the lantern, and we'll make the trial !"

We comprehended the whole plan in a moment, and hope revived. But there was need of haste, and we went at the work with a will. The lantern was lighted, and the trap-door lifted. This cellar was a small space, with a ragged bottom of solid rock, and the four kegs of gunpowder were placed together near the center. Holes were bored with a bung-auger, and the powder spread from one keg to the others, and then we prepared a match, which we found without trouble, as plenty of match-paper had been brought with the other materials for mining. Directly there came a thundering crash upon the door, and the howls of the demons were exultant. Quickly as possible the match was applied to a hole we had made—a match which we thought would give us time to escape, and at the same time allow our enemy time to enter—and then we hastened up and closed the trap after us. Another and another crash came upon the oaken door, and we could see that the hinges were giving away. We extinguished the lantern, and sprang up the ladder. Elwell opened the scuttle and passed out—I followed—then came Matthew and Theodore, with Pat in the rear. The scuttle was closed, and just as it went down we heard the door come crashing in, and a yell of triumph broke from the marauders as they rushed in.

"Quick !" cried the agent, slipping from the roof upon the rock. "The powder will be reached in a few moments."

I could see him only a few feet from me, and I followed him without much care for how or where I stepped. Down the steep and ragged precipice he went, and down I went after him, tearing my clothes and bruising the flesh as I slid, and stumbled and rolled along, but taking no heed of pain while the howling of those incarnate fiends came up from the place we had left.

"Now—look sharp !" cried Elwell—and he disappeared. I looked sharp enough to find myself at the edge of the shelving rock, but before I could make any plan for changing my rate of speed, over I went—down some six feet—where I brought up upon a bed of bushes. The others were after me before I could fairly gain my feet, and when I gained sense enough to look around I was stunned again. There came a sharp, hissing, crackling noise—then the earth shook beneath me—a roar, a crash, as though the mountain had been rent in twain—a momentary darkness—a sense of oppression—a red glare shooting up into the heavens—and then the thunder broke upon the giant rocks, and went rolling over the distant peaks. A shower of stones and splinters fell about us, and when the shock was passed, and sense returned, the agent started up.

"Now is our time !" he said. "The path is clear. Follow me."

I did follow him, though in dense darkness for awhile, for the smoke of the terrific blast had settled like a thunder-cloud over the hill ; but I managed to keep the way. In a few moments we struck the plateau in front of the cot, but we saw none of the marauders ; and in a short time longer we had begun to descend the hill, and were clear of the smoke. We reached the lake, and found a boat, and by ten o'clock we were safe at Ballyronan.

On the following morning, in company with a suitable force, we returned to the place where the cot had stood. Parts of the walls were standing, and the blackened, shattered ruins were scattered over the hill. Here and there we found torn and mangled corses—many, many of them—we found them till I sickened of the search and sight, and turned away. We never knew exactly how many were killed on that night, though it could not have been far from twenty. Some may have escaped who entered the cot after the door was battered down, but I never heard of any such. At all events, the leaders of the marauding spirits of Armagh perished there, and their more fortunate fellows, who had remained at home on that fatal night, gave the well disposed agents no more trouble.

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WOLVES IN KANSAS.

FROM THE RECOLLECTIONS OF A SURVEYOR.

I passed through a large part of Kansas in 1854, on my return from Arkansas. Although there are no trees in most places, and therefore wild animals are, on the whole, few, yet, as belts of timber are found here and there along the streams, and certain animals find coverts of different kinds, I saw them, or some traces of them, every day. Prairie wolves were common, and sometimes, in the night, seemed to be innumerable. I could not imagine where they came from, on the open plains, when, having met with none, or only a solitary one here and there in the course of a long ride, as darkness came on I would hear them howling on all sides, and sometimes very near me. I was told that they lived in holes in the ground, and this was the only supposition on which I could account for their frequent sudden appearance and disappearance.

I had no good opportunity to observe their habits, but it is said, on good authority, that they are very systematic, like certain other wild animals in different countries, having sentinels stationed around the grounds which they occupy, who are very watchful, and give a peculiar yell when danger is seen approaching, to warn the whole herd. They have a different cry for the signal of "all's well ;" and the prairie, it is said, on which, a moment before, nothing living was to be seen, very soon becomes covered with the sagacious creatures. Seldom, however, as I believe, do the prairie wolves come into the open air in great numbers by daylight, especially in open ground. They are chiefly a nocturnal animal by nature, like other wolves ; but when hungry, or when their food can be found in the day time, they probably may depart from their regular habits of keeping close while the sun shines. What they feed upon has been a question : but their food is probably field-mice, birds, and such other small animals as they can find. They are quite harmless to those of large size, never being known to attack even a sheep. The utmost they ever venture to do about a flock, is to pick up a young or feeble lamb, when they happen to find it left alone on the prairie.

But there is another kind of animals sometimes found in Kansas, though, fortunately, far less abundantly. These are the black wolves, which are of large size, powerful, bold and dangerous, it is said, sometimes, even to men. I never, however, heard of any instance of their daring to attack even a solitary person, though I should not wish to meet one alone, unless well armed. They appear never to go in troops, as most wolves often do ; but this may be owing to their small numbers. The first time I heard of any near me, was at the house of one of the first settlers about the head waters of the Arkansas river, which rises near the Santa Fe road, about the middle of Eastern Kansas. Arriving at his log-house in the evening, I was hospitably entertained, and in the morning found my host and his brother in great excitement, because their hogs had been killed during the night by black wolves. They knew, by certain signs, that the depredators were of that description, and, in their rage, they made preparations to pursue and kill them.

As they chose the route which I was to travel, in order to overtake them, I was glad of their company, and we proceeded together at a rapid pace. It seemed quite strange why they should push on after a prey which they could not see, and never had seen, and which they did not even pretend to track by any visible traces, or by the scent of any hound. Yet on they went, talking confidently of overtaking the wolves in a day or two at least ; and when I inquired what led them to expect to succeed, replying, "Ah ! you'll see !" or "we know ; don't you suppose we know ?"

"Never mind, look out," said they, when, after sunset, we approached a ledge of rocks, overgrown with bushes, towards which our line of march had been for some time directed. "That's where the black wolves spent last night, and they may be there now," said my companions. We approached with our rifles in hand, and cocked ; but nothing was heard, and nothing living seen. On reaching the place, I found a small cave on the south side, so overhung by rocks as to be completely sheltered against all weathers, unless, perhaps, in strong southerly storms. I was then struck, for the first time, by some remarkable peculiarities of the limestone bluffs, which, in all that part of Kansas, as I perceived in subsequent travels, are common wherever the rocks appear above the surface. The strata have a dip towards the north, and only here and there a ledge is anywhere to be seen, and never a large one. From the character of the rocks, and the slanting direction of the strata, it appears perfectly plain, on examination, even to a person with only a little scientific knowledge, like myself, that the action of the elements, in the course of time, must naturally form little caverns among them, on a level with the ground, and always towards the south. I confess I was struck with some very interesting and serious reflections on making these observations, and drawing several conclusions which successively presented themselves to my mind. Each of those ledges marks a quarry for future civilized men. But in the long-existing state of the country, they have served a different, but no less important purpose to the wild and unsettled inhabitants, both brutes and human beings. On those open and apparently boundless prairies, where often, for many miles, not a grove is to be seen, and no other shelter can be found from the northerly winds, which are often very high and cold in the winter, there have been provided, sometimes at moderate distances, comfortable refuges from the cold winds, and the snows with which they sometimes cover the prairie. And the temperature in them is found to be much more mild than that of the atmosphere without, for they are so situated and so formed that the sun shines into them during almost the entire day, and the rocks retain the heat, even through a great part of the night.

I now found an explanation of the proceedings of my companions, for the wild beasts have doubtless made those places their retreats for ages, and the frontiersmen have become acquainted with their habits in this respect, so that they can form confident and very sure conclusions concerning their movements. This I saw proved in that case, and it was confirmed by observations made afterwards. We spent the night in the cave, after having prepared and eaten a supper of such provisions as we had brought with us. In the morning we were up and on the way early, and at night stopped at another cave, in another ledge of rocks, where we experienced another disappointment, yet found another testimony to the accuracy of my companions' calculations in marks of black wolves, which they insisted were those of the identical animals which they were pursuing. I could not but feel some doubts, but I would not contradict them. They then gave up the chase, but assured me that I should find that those same wolves had preceded me on the route which I told them I should pursue · and truly I continued to find, in several of the caves which I afterwards entered, such traces as they had shown me, and which half inclined me to adopt their opinions in full.

What I had now learned of the advantages offered to travelers by those little caverns, in the cool nights of that season, led me to seek them every evening, when no habitation was to be found ; but the conviction that they were frequently the retreats of wild animals made me form a resolution which I should have been ashamed to make known to my companions, and this I began to put in practice the first night after we parted company. Having traveled all day, and observed a small swell in the prairie before me, I was glad to find it one of the limestone ledges, and in it a sheltered spot, under a rocky shelf, such as I have described. After fastening my horse, so that he could eat as much of the best grass as he needed, I began to prepare for myself ; and one of the first things I did, after making a fire to boil my coffee and roast a prairie-hen, was to collect a large quantity of dry bushes and dead grass, and lay it in a semi-circle in front of my resting-place. After supper, and when it had grown dark, I set them on fire, that I might feel safe from the intrusion of any unwelcome visitor during my sleeping hours, for I was very weary, and expected to be insensible till morning. I had often heard that most animals, and especially wolves, are terrified by fire in the night, and I felt perfectly secure with such a wall of protection in front of me.

I did not fall asleep, however, as soon as I expected, for the light and noise of the fire, and now and then a sound which seemed to have proceeded from some other cause, kept my attention alive, and more than once I fancied I heard the sound of some beast approaching, and then thought I saw the dim form of something passing near. At length, however, I fell asleep, and I must have had a long nap, for when I awoke the fire was burning very faintly, and in some places merely smoldering. What it could have been that waked me I did not know, but I then distinctly heard the sound of something stepping lightly, at a short distance, and, on looking in that direction, saw two bright lights, shining like stars. Instantly I was reminded of what I had heard of the brilliancy of the eyes of animals at night, when a light is reflected from them. My rifle was in my hand, aimed and fired, in less time than I have been in telling of it, and I heard a heavy body fall, and a little movement, for a moment, in the prairie-grass, with which I was very well satisfied, as the bright eyes had disappeared. Then, after listening awhile to nothing but silence, I decided that all was safe, and that it would be time enough to look after my game in the morning, replenished the fire, lay down again, and did not wake till it was time to rise.

I then felt quite bold again, and hastened to see what I had shot, when I found, to my satisfaction, a fine deer lying dead on the ground, a few feet only outside of my fiery barricade, and his venison served me, not only for breakfast that morning, but also for the best part of my food for several days after.

◆

ALWAYS A WOMAN.

It is an old proverb that there is always a woman at the bottom of every difficulty in the world—and not only a woman, but a *handsome* one. First a goddess and next a woman was the cause of the war between the Greeks and Trojans and of the besieging and taking of Troy, as everybody knows. Heaven and earth were at peace, and the gods and goddesses enjoyed the most perfect tranquillity ; when the *goddess* Discord, who delights in confusion and quarrels, displeased at this universal calm, resolved to excite dissensions. In order to effect this, she threw among the goddesses a golden apple, upon which these words were written, "To the fairest." Immediately each of the goddesses wanted to have the apple, and each said she was the handsomest ; for goddesses are as anxious about their beauty as mere mortal ladies. The strife was, however, more particularly between Juno, the wife of Jupiter ; Venus, the goddess of love ; and Pallas, the goddess of arts and sciences. At length they agreed to be judged by a shepherd, named Paris, who fed his flocks upon Mount Ida, and was, however, son to Priam, king of Troy. They appeared all three before Paris ; for, in order to judge critically, and to determine equitably, it was requisite that they all should be seen. Juno offered him the grandeurs of the world, if he would decide in her favor ; Pallas promised him arts and sciences ; but Venus, who tempted him with the most *beautiful woman* in the universe, prevailed, and he gave her the apple.

It may easily be imagined how glad Venus was, and how angry Juno and Pallas were. Venus, in order to perform her promise, ordered Paris to go to Menelaus, in Greece, whose wife, named Helena, would fall in love with him : accordingly he went, and was kindly entertained by Menelaus ; but soon after, Paris ran away with Helena, and carried her off to Troy. Menelaus, irritated at this injurious breach of hospitality, complained to his brother Agamemnon, king of Mycene, who engaged the Greeks to avenge the affront. Ambassadors were sent to Troy, to demand the restitution of Helena, and in case of a denial to declare war. Paris refused to restore her, upon which war was declared.

Although beautiful women are so apt to be dangerous, we can't say as we would have their number less.

◆

Fraud worse than Theft.—Fraud is a greater crime than theft ; for care and vigilance, with a very common understanding, may preserve a man's goods from thieves, but honesty has no protection against fraud ; and, since it is necessary that there should be a perpetual intercourse of buying and selling, and dealing upon credit, where fraud is permitted and connived at, or has no law to punish it, the honest dealer is always undone, and the knave gets the advantage.

◆

Three Foolish Actions.—Cato the Censor, an old Roman of great virtue and much wisdom, used to say, there were but three actions of his life which he regretted. The first was, the having told a secret to his wife ; the second, that he had once gone by sea when he might have gone by land ; and the third, the having become surety for an acquaintance.

◆

Ingratitude.—Ingratitude among some nations is a capital crime ; for they reason thus, that whoever makes ill returns to his benefactor must needs be a common enemy to the rest of mankind, from whom he has received no obligation, and therefore such a man is not fit to live.

YES, OR NO.

BY ALICE CARY.

Now tell me all my fate, Jenny,—
  Why need I plainer speak?
For you see my foolish heart has bled
  It's secret in my cheek!

You must not leave me thus, Jenny—
  You will not, when you know,
It is my life your treading on
  At every step you go.

Ah, should you smile as now, Jenny,
  When th' wintry weather blows,
The daisy, waking out of sleep,
  Would come up through the snows.

Shall our house be on the hill, Jenny,
  Where the sumach hedges grow?
You must kiss me, darling, if it's yes,
  And kiss me if it's no.

It shall be very fine—the door
  With bean-vines overrun,
And th' window toward the harvest-field
  Where first our love begun.

What marvel that I could not mow
  When you came to rake the hay,
For I cannot speak your name, Jenny,
  If I've nothing else to say.

Nor is it strange that when I saw
  Your sweet face in a frown,
I hung my scythe in the apple-tree,
  And thought the sun was down.

For when you sung the tune that ends
  With such a golden ring
The lark was made ashamed, and sat
  With her head beneath her wing.

You need not try to speak, Jenny,
  You blush and tremble so,
But kiss me, darling, if it's yes,
  And kiss me if it's no!

THE TIGER AND ANACONDA.

A SOUTH AMERICAN ADVENTURE.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

A number of years ago, (said our friend Whiting,) I was a resident of the Republic of Venezuela; during which time some business transactions led me to visit a small Indian village, situated on the bank of the Upper Orinoco—a region of country covered with dense forests, and abounding with wild animals and reptiles of almost every genus and species. So great indeed is the danger in these wilds, that the Indian never ventures to penetrate their recesses without being armed with his long blow-gun and poisoned arrows, his lance, machete and lariat, which are his principal weapons of defense.

While sojourning in this village—which was one of the missions established by the Jesuits during the early Spanish settlement of the country—I became acquainted with an old Indian hunter, whose baptismal name was Jose, and by whose invitation I made several excursions into the surrounding forest in quest of game.

The last excursion of this kind, I shall never forget. Accompanied by my man Pedro, we had started at an early hour of a dull, foggy morning, in quest of deer; and led by the Indian hunter, we were not long in reaching a dense thicket, which stretched along the bank of the Orinoco, and through which the different animals had a run to the water, where, when in the immediate vicinity, they generally slaked their thirst.

Soon after reaching this point, so favorable to the capture of game, a light breeze sprung up, which, together with the sun, began to dispel the fog; and as we were standing near the path, Pedro some fifty feet from us, and all listening, and striving to catch a view of surrounding objects, we were suddenly startled by a loud rustling of bushes and snapping of twigs behind us; and the next moment Pedro came bounding forward, exclaiming:

"*Virgen Purisima! el tigre! el tigre!*" "Holy Virgin! the tiger! the tiger!"

I had my double-barrel gun loaded with ball and shot, and in an instant it was at my shoulder, ready for the enemy the moment he should make his appearance, while Jose poised his lance, and stood prepared for the encounter.

Neither of us ran, nor even attempted it—for we had sufficient knowledge of the velocity and ferocity of the animal, and sufficient presence of mind, to be certain that we could not reach the stream before him, and our only safety lay in facing him and gaining the advantage of a first assault; and if we could have made Pedro comprehend this in time, he might perhaps have been saved much suffering.

"Here! here! quick! spring behind us!" we both shouted, as he went bounding past toward the river.

"Save me! save me! *Madre de Dios!*" he yelled, taking no heed of our words.

"The Saints help us!" cried old Jose; "the poor fool will be killed, unless we can wound the tiger and draw him from his prey. There! there! *Valgame Dios!* Quick, Don Juan! look sharp, and don't miss him!"

As he spoke, I caught a glimpse, through the partially raised vapor, of the glossy hide of the ferocious brute, which was bounding forward like lightning, and which was more like the flash of some glittering ball, passing swiftly before my eyes, than any other comparison at my command.

But the exclamations of Jose had caused me to be prepared—my rifle was to my eye, cocked and ready—and that instant I pulled the trigger. One barrel was discharged; and from the yell which followed, I was convinced that it had taken effect upon the animal; but how slightly, or how seriously, I could not determine. As he still kept upon his course, however, I believed him to be stung to madness, rather than mortally wounded, and the piteous cries of Pedro thrilled my every nerve.

"Save me! save me! *por el amor de Dios!* save me!" we could hear him shout, as he ran with all his might toward the bank of the stream, some seventy-five or a hundred yards distant—he well knowing if he could plunge into the liquid element before his pursuer, he would be saved, as no animal of the genus feline will take to the water unless compelled by some imminent danger behind it.

"Quick, Jose! we must do our best to save him!" cried I, as I leaped from the bushes into the path, and sprung after the flying beast.

There was no time of course to reload my piece; but I had one barrel still undischarged; and if I could get up to the beast in time, I was in hopes to lodge its contents in some vital part, ere he might be able to do either of us any injury. Jose, with his long spear poised for a sudden thrust, and his keen machete (small cutlass) ready to his hand, kept close by my side, shouting with every breath:

"Run, Pedro—run—or the devil will have you!"

He strained every nerve, but had not gone more than twenty or thirty yards, when a wild shriek from Pedro, and a sharp, angry growl of the hungry and infuriated beast, too plainly told us that the poor fellow had been overtaken.

"*Baraja!*" exclaimed Jose; "it will all be over with him in a minute."

"On! on! for the love of God!" I shouted.

Another twenty yards, which we seemed an age in passing, though I never ran faster in my life, brought us in sight of the tiger and his human prey. There was a little opening here in the trees above; and the sun, being able to penetrate to the earth, had so dispelled the fog as to give us a fair view of what was taking place.

Pedro had been overtaken, either by falling or by being less fleet of foot than his adversary, and was now on the ground, shrieking with fear and pain, with the savage beast fairly upon him, tearing and lacerating his flesh in a truly horrible manner.

At any less critical time I should have been afraid to fire, for fear of missing my mark and killing the poor guide; but his danger was too imminent for me to hesitate now. Unless the tiger could be drawn from him, his doom was certain; and darting up as near to the beast as my own safety would justify, I pointed my rifle full at his breast, and fortunately poured into him the contents of the other barrel—Jose at the same moment thrusting the spear into his side.

Thus assailed in turn, and painfully if not fatally wounded, the agile beast, with a sharp, fierce yell, at once turned upon us; but springing back, I clubbed my rifle, and, as he darted toward me, brought it down, with almost stunning effect, directly between the eyes—Jose at the same time, with a yell almost as wild as his own, giving him another thrust in the body with his long spear.

This warm reception had the effect to check the brute's advance; and shaking his head, and working his long tail vigorously, he suddenly retreated a few paces, and crouched down as if for a spring.

Not caring to wait for a second attack, I shouted to Jose to sieze Pedro and make for the river with all haste. The next moment we were both at his side; and grappling him with all our strength, we brought him to his feet, torn and bleeding as he was, and set forward, half-dragging him with us—he, bewildered and confused, instinctively making what efforts he could to escape.

Oh! what would I not have given then, to have had my two barrels again loaded! in which case I would have ventured a more steady aim, and run the risk of being the victor.

For some moments the fierce animal remained in his position, lashing his tail with fury, and glaring fiercely at us with his sharp, keen eyes; and then rising on his haunches, he began to lick his wounds. This gave us an opportunity to get some considerable distance from him—an opportunity which we were not slow to improve.

The river was now plainly in sight, and we were straining every nerve to reach it, still keeping a keen watch upon the wounded animal, when suddenly, to our dismay, he uttered a sharp, shrill sound, and again bounded after us—though not with the same velocity as before, but with a limp in his gait, and a slight reeling or staggering motion, as if he were growing weak from loss of blood.

"Forward! forward!" I shouted; "do your utmost, Pedro! The tiger is again after us, but the river is near, and a desperate effort will fetch you to the water in advance of him!"

We had just reached the bank of the stream, at a point where it would permit of a person's wading in some several feet; and supporting Pedro between us, Jose and I had actually placed one foot in the water; when, glancing back, I perceived that our feline enemy was again crouching for a spring.

"Look out! take care! he may reach us even yet!" I cried; and pushing forward the wounded Indian, regardless of the depth, I threw my rifle on the bank, and plunged in after him.

Seizing the wounded man, to keep him above water, and at the same time getting my feet upon a firm basis, I straightened myself up, and looked back to watch the result, intending, should it be necessary, to plunge my guide further into the stream, and dive under myself—Jose meantime settling himself firmly on the ground near the shore, and arranging his lance in such a manner as to impale the animal if he sprung.

But just as I looked back, a sight met my gaze that fairly made my blood run cold. On a tree just above the crouching tiger, and under whose very limbs we had ourselves just passed, was a large, horrible-looking serpent of the Boa species, which, with his great, ugly eyes keenly fastened on the animal beneath, was slowly uncoiling his spotted folds, and preparing for his deadly stroke.

I had just time to perceive this, and that the tiger, all unconscious of his new enemy, still remained crouched, evidently hesitating about making his leap at us, when suddenly there was a kind of hissing sound, and like lightning the huge reptile descended fairly upon the head of his victim, the blow apparently being more stunning than that which I had given him with my hunting-piece.

"Good God!" exclaimed I; "what an escape we have had!" and on the impulse of the moment, I was about to dive under the water; but a quiet, unconcerned remark of Jose, arrested my design.

"Thank the saints!" he said, devoutly crossing himself; "we are saved now, Don Juan."

"But is not the serpent a more dangerous enemy than the tiger?" I inquired, in tremulous haste—for I knew much less about such matters than he, who had witnessed many a smilar scene in the course of his long and active life.

"The danger is past," he replied; "but it is almost a miracle the anaconda did not attack us as we passed under him. The good saints must have preserved us! Have no fear now, however, but watch and see. He will kill the tiger, and swallow him, and then we can easily kill him."

That he would kill the tiger, there could be no doubt—for even while Jose spoke, though the animal was struggling fiercely, and wildly shrieking forth his fear and rage, the tightening coils of the huge monster were around him in a terrible embrace, and we could hear the bones of the poor beast snap and crack like so many dried twigs. Then came a few moments of silence, followed by another desperate struggle, during which the monster drew himself closer and closer round his victim, till, with eyes almost bursting from their sockets, and tongue far protruding from his mouth, death kindly came to his relief.

I was now anxious to get my gun, reload it, and fire upon the monster, fearing he might escape; but Jose said:

"Not yet, Don Juan. Wait a few minutes, and see the snake swallow his victim, and then we can approach him without danger."

Assisting Pedro, who felt rather weak and faint, to where Jose stood, and where the water was little more than ankle deep, I disposed him in an easy, recumbent position, and then fixed my whole attention upon the anaconda.

A. BOBBETT. SC.

I never witnessed a more horrible and repulsive sight. Slowly, when he found the life was crushed out of his prey, the huge serpent unwound fold after fold from his crushed and bleeding victim, and then began to prepare him for deglutition, by covering him all over with the saliva peculiar to his species.

"Ugh!" grunted Jose, as he turned to me with a look of disgust. "*Caramba!* what a hog he is."

Having thus prepared the huge, misshapen mass for swallowing—the tiger, however, being reduced by compression to nearly one-half his natural size—the hungry anaconda slowly stretched himself out at full length, opened his ungainly jaws, fastened them upon the smaller portion of the beast, and slowly worked the carcass downward into his capacious maw.

When he had got it about half way down, I stepped to the shore and began to load my piece, putting two balls in each barrel; but so excited was I by the events which had just taken place, and my own narrow escape from a horrible death, that my hands shook and trembled like one afflicted with the ague, and my eyes were kept continually moving about in quest of some new and terrible danger.

Having loaded my piece—Jose meantime giving some attention to the wounds of Pedro, which were not as dangerous as we at first supposed—I waited till the last of the brute had disappeared, and the huge monster had begun to stretch himself out in a sluggish, apathetic state.

"Now is your time, Senor!" said the veteran hunter; "no fear of the reptile now. Take a rest and a good sight from where you are, and let him have the contents of one barrel in his cursed head; and if that does not answer to fix him, you have the other barrel in reserve, and my lance and machete will then be able to do the rest."

I did as directed, and, taking a good aim, pulled the trigger. Each barrel was loaded with two balls, as I said before, and both took effect, mangling the creature's head shockingly, and causing him to writhe and flounder about in a most dangerous manner.

He had got his death-wound, however, and his wild struggles gradually grew fainter and fainter, till at last I ventured to approach quite near him, and give him the contents of the other barrel, which immediately put an end to his existence.

We then set to work and took off his skin, which Jose gave to me, with the remark that I was entitled to the spoils. This, it may readily be believed, I bore away in triumph; and I felt doubly proud of my achievement, when, on measurement, I found it to be no less than forty-five feet in length.

We did not hunt any more that day; I had had enough "*sport*" to satisfy me for some time to come; and so we set out on our return to the Indian village, which we reached in a couple of hours, Jose and myself assisting the wounded Pedro all the way.

Pedro was kept in the house a few days by his wounds; but under the care of an Indian doctor, he so far recovered as to be able to guide me on my way when I left the village; and in three month's time, though much scarred and disfigured, was again as well as ever. But he seemed to have no further desire to hunt while he remained with me; and whenever we chanced to be passing a thicket, I would sometimes hear him mutter:

"*Ave Maria Purisima!* Please don't let any more ——— tigers scent poor Pedro!"

THE MEMORY OF THE MOTHER.

Oh! the memory of the mother's heart—how green, how fresh it is! No flowers wither there, no lilies fade. But the dark eyes look still through the spirit bars of earth and heaven; they are "my little baby's eyes" still. Though the earth covers it, and grass shrouds it, the fair little body seems often nestling close to her bosom, and she only adds a pair of snow-white wings and wafts it to its celestial home.

* * *

SEMLER.—A man who published a bad and dangerous book excused the act to Semler, by saying that he only did it *to excite inquiry.* "An incendiary," said Semler, "might as well justify himself for setting a town on fire by pleading that he only did it *to make trial of the engines.*"

* * *

CAGING YOUNG GIRLS.—The life of a young girl should not be rendered too lonely—for constant solitude and isolation from genial society is apt to create that morbid state of the imagination which leads to lunacy or imprudence.

* * *

PLEASURE is sometimes only a change of pain. A man who has had the gout, thinks he feels first rate when he gets down to rheumatism again.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J.—Sends us a vulgar attack upon some offending person, and says, "You will please publish the following [that is, the attack.—ED.] in the LEDGER of next week, as I am a steady subscriber to it." Some people seem to think that if they subscribe for a paper they have a right to control its columns to any extent which their whims may demand. This is a great mistake, at least so far as the LEDGER is concerned. There is but one editor and proprietor of this paper; and he does not allow the slightest interference from any quarter whatever.

A. L.—The best thing for you to do is to say nothing to your lover or anybody else about his unfortunate inebriation. He was evidently deceived into drinking by his companions, and the very great grief he has felt on account of it, is proof that he condemns the occurrences which lead to the mishap as much as you do.

HENRY H. W.—It would do no harm for you to let the girl know that *you* love *her*, but you should not seek to get an avowal from her without first asking her parents' consent.

SEVERAL LADIES want to know if, on a lady's asking her beau, who has accompanied her home, to walk in, she should precede or follow him into the house. She should precede him.

ENRIQUE.—Drummers do get situations in the American Navy, but whether you could get one or not, we cannot say.

CONSTANT READER.—Webster pronounces the word Aix-la-Chapelle, *akes-lah-shah-pell.*

COUNTRY GIRL.—A *loon* is a migratory water-fowl, which is also known as "the great northern diver." A needy, lazy fellow is also called a loon; hence, probably, the phrase you say you have often heard—"as hungry as a *loon.*" *Mrs.* is an abbreviation of *mistress,* which is colloquially, or in conversation, properly pronounced *mis'ess.* A gentleman should precede a lady both in going down and in going up stairs. A gentleman should be introduced *to* a lady, and her name mentioned first; as "Mrs. Smith, permit me to introduce to you Mr. Jones;" or more briefly: "Mrs. Smith, Mr. Jones." What the difference between a university and a college is, depends upon the sense in which the terms are used. A college is many things—political, theological, and educational. As the terms are ordinarily used in this country, a college and a university are about the same thing, that is, an incorporated educational establishment of a fixed and high order. But a university is more properly a collection of colleges, where all the sciences and philosophies are taught to the utmost extent.

IN DESPAIR.—This correspondent says the people of the village wherein she resides are sadly given to neglecting their own business for the purpose of keeping a watch upon that of their neighbors. *She* is an object of their especial attention, and can do nothing without having her actions canvassed and criticised, and she wants to know what she had better do. You had better set your neighbors a good example, by minding your own business so thoroughly as not to take any notice of their gossip and slander. As to your other question, a girl is not engaged to a man who has never "proposed" to her and been accepted; and if a man pays attention to a young lady two years without "coming to the point," he should not complain if she left him for somebody else.

CHARLES S.—If a tenant did not agree in his lease to permit people to come into his rooms for the purpose of examining them with a view to rent them, he need not do so. Nor has his landlord any right to come into the rooms without the tenant's permission; and if a landlord breaks open the door of a tenant's apartments, or unlocks it with false keys, he can be sued for tresspass. In short, the landlord has no more right than a stranger has to meddle with the premises against the tenant's wishes and in violation of the conditions of the lease.

OBSERVER.—You know the old adage—"The proof of a pudding is in the eating of it." We think we may also safely say that the proof of the popularity of a paper is in the extent and continuity of its circulation. We are perfectly satisfied with the public endorsement of our judgment and taste thus far, and shall not yield our opinion for another's, until he shows us a larger permanent circulation for a paper got up by himself, than that which the LEDGER has had for the last two or three years.

SCHOOL HOUSE PROBLEM.—In the LEDGER of October 30th, was a problem as follows:—A lives 122 rods east of a school-house, B 108 rods west, C 134 rods south, D 146 rods north; how far will A have to go to visit his neighbors and return home again? We have received more than a hundred solutions of this problem, all of which give 721 rods and a fraction as the answer.

GENEVIEVE.—It is impossible for you to ascertain whether the person's ancestor on either side was black, unless you trace his genealogy, inasmuch as he does not show any trace of such lineage. You should be cautious about believing disparaging reports about one whom you have so long known, and who has always borne an irreproachable character.

PEDAGOGUE.—You should beware of quack doctors, and such as advertise to treat cases by mail. An error of treatment in your case would either occasion chronic disease of a most painful kind, or speedily consign you to the grave. Carefulness in your diet, and an avoidance of all stimulants, should be rigidly adhered to; and frequent consultations with reliable physicians should be had.

GRANDMAMMA.—You must consider the feelings of your daughters-in-law and sons-in-law, if you wish them to regard yours. No man or woman likes to be set at nought in his or her own family. Parents are naturally and properly jealous of interference between them and their children, and where much of such interference occurs trouble and alienation of affection are sure to follow.

F. L.—We suspect, from your statement, that you have become tired of your engagement, having seen a woman you like better than the one to whom you are engaged, and now seek to get up a quarrel in order that you may have an excuse for deserting her to whom you have pledged your faith. You ought to be ashamed of yourself.

LOTHARIO.—The best way to settle any difficulty is to dive right at the heart of it at once, and have a distinct understanding of what the trouble is, and what the parties wish to do. Therefore, state the case to the young lady frankly, and ask her out and out for the favor you seek.

L., Moundsville.—If the accident occurred as you represent it, and if the facts were just as you state them to be, you could probably recover heavy damages of the railroad company. State your case to some good lawyer, and let him undertake it on speculation, if he thinks it is a good one.

CORA ISABELLA.—The correct pronunciation of the name *Goethe* is, *guh*-tay, *uh* having the sound of *u* in burr. *Psyche* is pronounced *sigh*-kee. Each word is accented on its first syllable. We do not understand your question about Thanksgiving in New Hampshire.

J. L. C.—The LEDGER of March 14th, 1857, contains the letter of Hon. Jefferson Davis, the then Secretary of War, concerning the qualifications of applicants for admission to the military academy at West Point. The name of the present Secretary of War is Floyd.

PICK-WICK.—The murderer of a sister would be styled a sororicide, from the Latin *soror,* sister. The word is accented on the second syllable, thus—so-*ror*-i-cide. It is seldom used, because the crime itself is very unfrequent.

A., Beverly.—The young lady's determination not to marry because she is in poor health is a very sensible one, and we are surprised that you do not concur with it. No person in poor health should marry.

AMOR.—If you have no religious belief, it would not probably make much difference with you to what sect your wife should belong; but you had better defer getting married until you *do* have a religious belief.

T. S. B.—Such an expression as "A man's principles are offended" would not be tolerated by a critic, although it would pass current with many who ought to know better than to uphold it.

LOLA.—It is right for your sister and her husband to sit up or go to bed, just as they please, whenever the "gentleman" calls; there is no obligation either way.

W. B. M.—We think you are mistaken in regard to visitors at Mount Vernon being shown the remains of Washington. We never heard of such a thing being done.

ISABELLE.—You can get the back numbers of the LEDGER you mention. Daphne and Atalanta, about whom you so earnestly inquire, were two young ladies of antiquity, who, having no LEDGER to write to for aid and counsel, got into difficulties of the most serious nature. Daphne was a daughter of the *river* Peneus. How a *river* could have a daughter we don't know; but it seems that in the mythological ages such an occurrence was one of the easiest things in the world. Daphne was a wonderful creature, the "loveliest of her sex," and, though a woman, proof against vanity and temptation of every kind. Apollo saw and fell passionately in love with her; but though he was young, handsome and accomplished, the god of the sun, of music and of poetry, and "highly connected," the nymph was shy, and the lover plead in vain. Apollo at last became "frenzied with love," and happening to meet Daphne in the fields one day, he rushed upon her with the determination to carry her off by force. She eluded his grasp and fled. Apollo gave chase. Daphne ran till she was out of breath, when, beginning to flag, Apollo came up, and was about to seize her, when the gods, in pity, changed her into a laurel, and Apollo clasped a tree, instead of Daphne, in his arms. He was, of course, greatly chagrined at this unexpected turn of affairs, but, in testimony of his love, he decreed the laurel to be the most honorable of trees, and ordained victorious warriors and celebrated poets to be crowned with it; hence the "laurel wreath" of honor, etc. Atalanta was a different sort of a girl from Daphne. She was a princess of extraordinary beauty, and a great coquette; consequently she had many lovers. She encouraged them all, but gave out that she would marry no man who could not outrun her, and that any one who entered the lists and was defeated should be put to death. Now, it so happened that Atalanta was the fleetest of foot of any human being. She easily outran the lovers who contended with her, and then caused them to be put to death. So many met with this fate, that the youths of that day became frightened, lost faith in their heels, and resigned all hope of winning the fleet and beautiful princess. But Hippomenes, a son of Mars, was not discouraged. He provided himself with three golden apples from the garden of the Hesperides, through the agency of Venus, who was probably jealous of Atalanta, and then challenged the latter to the race. They ran, and the princess was fast distancing him, when he threw the golden apples in her path. Tempted beyond the power of resistance by their dazzling beauty and splendor, Atalanta stopped to gather them up, and Hippomenes dashed ahead and won the race. She was therefore obliged to marry him; but they unfortunately made their nuptial couch in the temple of Cybele, mother of the gods, which so affronted that venerable lady that she changed Hippomenes into a lion and Atalanta into a lioness. So you see what mischief Atalanta's love of golden apples brought upon her.

TWO STUDENTS say the members of their college are divided on the question as to whether table-spoonsful or table-spoonfuls is the most correct expression, and wish us to decide the matter for them. We will do so, but will first ask the students to imagine twelve table spoons filled with water, and lying side by side. Then imagine every one of those spoons emptied into a dish. Would there not then be twelve spoonsful of water in the dish? Next, suppose you take one table-spoon, fill it with water and empty it into a dish. Then fill the spoon again and empty it as before. You will then have two table-spoonfuls of water; and so on to any extent. Three pails filled with water would be three pailsful; the same pail filled three times would be three pailfuls. Such is the reasoning of certain authorities on this subject, and we give it for what it is worth. Our opinion is that either form of compound nouns similar to those above mentioned is correct. Spoonsful or spoonfuls, hatsful or hatfuls, thimblesful or thimblefuls, etc., etc., is correct.

TAMMANY HALL.—Yes. Were there a telegraphic wire stretched around the globe, and should you send a message its whole distance, starting toward the west, it would keep going west all the way; or if a man should start westward and travel around the globe he would keep going west all the way round. It would, of course, be different were he to start northward and travel round the globe. Supposing such a journey possible, he would then go north until he arrived at the north pole, thence he would go south to the south pole, and thence north again to the point from which he started. This is because there are both a north and a south pole, or two points toward which latitude is reckoned. But there are no two points to which or from which longitude is reckoned by the same nation. We begin at Washington and end at Washington, the British begin and end at Greenwich Observatory, and the French at Paris.

MANY SUBSCRIBERS have recently asked us questions about private and individual matters relating to various personal interests, answers to which would involve either commendations or censures of numerous articles and inventions and many ladies and gentlemen. Such questions we never answer. We never single out any private property for praise or disparagement. Our correspondents will please remember this, as they will thereby save themselves and us much needless trouble.

L. L. W.—This correspondent says he is boarding at a house where there is no "extra bed," and that, in consequence of this deficiency, visitors and guests are frequently quartered in his bed, and that a sick person has been forced upon him in this way for several weeks; and he asks, "What had I better do?" We do not know what *you* had better do; but were it our case we should at once seek other quarters.

QUERIST.—We do not think you would be justified in telling an untruth in regard to a matter on which you had been questioned, and about which you would not wish to give the questioner any information. You might say that you did not wish to converse on the subject, that you had nothing to say about it, or give any other honest answer. It would be better to remain perfectly silent than to utter a falsehood.

VALLEJO.—You could learn the Latin language without a teacher. You could also learn to *read* French, but not to *speak* it, without a teacher. It will make very little difference what text-books you use. In strolling through the woods or fields, if you should meet a strange lady, you should pass her by without notice, unless she should bow to you.

MATTIE.—You need not write to the gentleman, (with whom you have engaged to correspond,) before he writes to you, simply because you are going to change your place of residence. You can leave your new address with the postmaster of the place where you now reside, and request him to forward your letters.

VILETO.—All you can do to win the love of the gentleman, is to be as good and lovely in his sight, and at all times, as you can. It is vain for you to seek to win him with the astrologer's charms or anything of that kind. Every young lady should have "charms" enough of her own.

BLOOMINGTON, Ind.—It would be rather an impudent thing for a gentleman to squeeze a lady's hand and retain it in his own, the first time he accompanied her anywhere. She should of course withdraw her hand from his grasp in a manner which would show to him that he had given offense.

A CONSTANT READER.—We do not think that you were justified in speaking to the young lady as you did. Your remark was impertinent. She had a right to dance with the young man until the music for the set ceased, and you had no business to make any remark about it.

T. A. M. L.—Do you not know what vessel your sister sailed in from Liverpool? You had better ascertain, if possible, and then inquire for her of the captain. A letter addressed to the Superintendent of the Quarantine, Staten Island, would reach that officer.

CADMUS.—Should we answer all your questions, there would be no space in this number of the LEDGER for answers to any other queries. Correspondents should not be greedy, but should content themselves with each asking one plain, sensible question at a time.

SHARP STICKS.—You are mistaken. Eighteen and three-fourths pounds of butter, at eighteen and three-fourths cents a pound does not come to $3,51 3-4. You will have to figure up the amount again. You forgot to multiply the two fractions by one another.

ABBAOTINE.—The attempt made by the United States to induce the British government to enter into some scheme for introducing a uniform decimal currency and uniformity of weights and measures, has as yet met with no encouragement.

JOHN J. W.—While your voice is "changing" from that of a boy to that of a man, do not practice singing at all. Good voices are often irretrievably injured by using them too much at that critical period.

YOUNG SAILOR.—We cannot aid you in getting a situation as cabin boy on board any ship whatever. By visiting New York, or some other seaport, and making due inquiry among ship-masters, you might find and obtain such a situation.

NORVAL.—We never heard or read that Washington was born on the 14th instead of the 22d day of February. Those who tell you that he was born on the 14th are ignoramuses, or else they are trying to quiz you.

A. E. K.—The lands of certain persons in Maryland, as well as in other States, were confiscated after or during the Revolution, and all such lands are beyond the reach of any descendants of the original owners.

GREEN ONE.—The phrase "to live by one's wits" means to live by stealing, swindling, or any kind of dishonesty or crime in which physical violence is not resorted to.

OPTICIAN.—There is no fixed price for a magic lantern, any more than for a jack-knife. You can get one for three dollars or for thirty dollars, or for any sum between those two.

CHARLIE HOWARD.—You could perhaps get a situation as errand boy in some office, by making persevering endeavors to do so.

T. J. B.—The late Freeman Hunt was the author of the work known as "The Lives of Eminent Merchants."

JOANIS, Hancock, N. Y.—You are mistaken.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*